

Pázmány Péter Catholic University

Institute of Archaeological Sciences

Doctoral School of History – Program of Archaeology



Medieval Rural Settlements in North Lebanon 12th and 13th centuries.

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Doctor in
History and Archaeology

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DECLARATION

This thesis was submitted for a PhD degree in history and archaeology at Pázmány Péter Catholic University. It is important to note that the product being presented is solely the result of my original work, unless any references, notes, or other statements have been specified.

SIGNATURE

Carla Chlela

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Carla Chlela', written in a cursive style.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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ABSTRACT

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, there was a massive influx of Europeans who migrated to the eastern Mediterranean coastline, which in turn led to the establishment of numerous settlements in the region. The Crusader state of the County of Tripoli had a relatively long existence, spanning almost two centuries, which is considered a significant historical phase. During this period a large number of buildings were constructed out of which attention focused on the well-preserved castles while almost no attention was paid to the lesser remains or such nearly “invisible” topics as the question of the rural settlements.

The significance of this research project is rooted in the fact that it aims to carry out a comprehensive examination of the rural settlements located in the northern region of Lebanon during the 12th and 13th centuries. The primary aim of this study is to provide an initial overview of the various settlement types that are present in the region embedded in a study of the region's history and geography.

The modern era of digital documentation has opened up a new world of possibilities for scholars in architecture and archaeology, as everything can now be captured and stored for future analysis and research. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the adapted surveying and documenting methods, this study delves into a detailed analysis of their methodology and the significant advantages they offer.

The built heritage has become a major focus of attention in recent years, with many new technologies and methodologies emerging that aim to provide better documentation and record-keeping. By utilizing these methodologies, it is possible to maintain the different stages of the built heritage over the years, as well as provide support for further comparisons and studies that can be conducted off-site.

Many remarkable architectural monuments were built during this era, including such rural settlement types as: fortified sites, rural towers, villages, and monastic landscapes among others. This study outlines the workflow for digital periodization and historical virtual reconstruction of documented sites

NOTES ON TRANSCRIPTION

Medieval sites usually had many different names and variants. Besides the original Arabic (or Semitic names) we occasionally find them in the Latin sources with various transcriptions. The present-day place names are usually transcribed variously. For a consistent and practical system, the present-day Arabic name of every site was used. For the larger towns which are well known, the English name was used, like Tripoli instead of Ṭarābulus, and some other sites on the Syrian coast like Homs instead of Ḥimṣ. The list of concordances, showing the medieval Frankish equivalent name of each site is given in databases of the sites mentioned in the Latin and Arabic sources.

In the transcription of Arabic names to Latin letters, the use of complex fonts was avoided and whenever it was possible, the equivalent of the different Arab letters was given with the simplest combination of Latin letters. The concordances are summarized in the tables below:

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| a ا | ط t |
| b ب | ظ z |
| t ت | ع 'c |
| th ث | gh غ |
| j ج | f ف |
| ḥ ح | q ق |
| kh خ | k ك |
| d د | l ل |
| dz ذ | m م |
| r ر | n ن |
| z ز | h ه |
| s س | w و |
| sh ش | y ي |
| ṣ ص | ء 'e |
| ḍ ض | a ة |

Long vowels are indicated with a dashed line.

INTRODUCTION

During the historical period between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the coastline of the eastern Mediterranean witnessed the settlement of hundreds of thousands of Europeans. The Crusader County of Tripoli managed to maintain its existence for almost two centuries. This period saw the construction of a vast array of distinctive architectural structures, encompassing a diverse range of urban and rural settlement types. These include castles, towers, courtyard houses, villages and other notable edifices. Some monuments have been the subject of previous studies by scholars, while others are only mentioned in Arabic or Latin sources.

After spending approximately two hundred years in the region, the Europeans left behind a significant number of marks of their presence, as well as architectural and archaeological evidence. Castles and other iconic places have been studied to a certain extent by scholars. Although the major focus has often been on larger castles, it is important to recognize that smaller sites also played a key role in the network of rural settlements that connect them to towns. Scholars and historians have largely neglected these smaller settlements, despite their importance. They are essential for understanding the full scope of the European occupation in the region. More extensive research is required to fully comprehend the extent of European impact.

In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the area's past, it is necessary to utilise a range of sources, including historical documents, archaeological evidence and geographical surveys. This process enables the acquisition of a more nuanced understanding of the region's past and present.

In this work various sources have been combined, such as medieval documents, travellers' accounts, map evidence, toponymy, archive and satellite photographs, and oral sources from locals. In the methodology chapter, these points are discussed and elaborated upon, including the adapted methodologies for documenting architecture and archaeology on site. The historical background chapter briefly traces the historical events that mainly influenced the development of the settlement network.

In this study, a variety of sources have been integrated, including medieval documents, travellers' accounts, cartographic evidence, toponymy, archival and satellite

photographs, and oral accounts from local residents. The methodology chapter discusses and elaborates upon these points, including the adapted methodologies for documenting architecture and archaeology on site. The historical background chapter provides a concise overview of the historical events that have had a significant impact on the evolution of the settlement network.

A brief investigation of the settlement patterns, along with an investigation of the distribution and basic characteristics of their centres, the towns, and the role those various fortifications played in the coastal region's life is presented. Historical sources and field surveys draw attention to sites that have not yet been fully explored. Consequently, further elements and characteristics are incorporated into the context of the 12th-century sites in the region. A review of written sources, when combined with on-site evidence, reveals that medieval settlement patterns have left considerable traces even in the countryside. The collation of data and its integration with an architectural analysis of the surviving remains yields insights into the density and characteristics of medieval villages.

1. RESEARCH OUTLINE

Scope.

This thesis will focus on the rural settlements of the Southern part of the County of Tripoli, the present-day North of Lebanon during the 12th and 13th centuries. The Case studies chosen for analysis represent the various types of medieval rural settlements identified in the region under study.

Aim.

The study has the following aims:

- 1- To provide an overview of the various settlement types that are present in the region. The study will focus on examining the rural settlements in Northern Lebanon dating from the 12th and 13th centuries.
- 2- To document this hitherto unexplored and unpublished heritage and provide an updated study and database. The database is comprehensively developed to include all the medieval archaeological and architectural sites located in the northern part of Lebanon dating from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and it will also feature an up-to-date map.
- 3- To examine the area's religious and socio-economic state during the Middle Ages. The roles played during this period were distinct in both the coastal region and the mountains. Researching the remains and settlement patterns of rural areas would contribute to a better understanding of medieval life and coastal history.
- 4- To examine the cultural practices and beliefs of the settlements' inhabitants, as well as their lifestyle, and to provide an insight into the development of the local economy. For a comprehensive understanding of settlements, it is equally important to comprehend their internal relationships, understand how regional trade and cultural exchange developed, and grasp the relationships between the inhabitants of the settlement and other settlements in the region.

Problem.

The information provided in the written sources is fragmentary. Medieval travellers and geographers discussed the occupation and religious affiliation of the individuals who lived in the region.

It is common for written sources and maps to display shifted locations and places, resulting in inaccurate descriptions of distances between them. There are certain places that are explicitly mentioned, but there are others that are completely obscure. Although descriptions of the architecture of the sites are sometimes available, they do not always aid in determining the sequence of construction phases. According to most sources, the Mount Lebanon villages are significant because of their fertility, strategic location, and security.

The unexplored and undocumented rural settlements in the region are facing different threats from neglect, degradation, conflict, urban expansion and climate change. This study will contribute to the documentation and preservation of this endangered region.

The complexity of the nature, the management of the COVID closures and the safety of some regions, were decisive factors that made the work more complex and challenging. The survey and the sites were visited during the holiday periods of Christmas and summer in the years 2018-2019 and 2020. Despite the limitations, the thesis's collected data offers valuable insight into the region's archaeological heritage and the effects of human activity on it.

Importance and Contribution to knowledge.

The research project has revealed a previously overlooked aspect of northern Lebanon's history: the rural settlements of the medieval period. Before this research, these settlements were undocumented and unexplored. The exploration of North Lebanon's history is necessary due to the significant gaps in knowledge regarding its historical, archaeological, and architectural heritage. Through detailed topographical and geographical analysis, the hidden narratives of this region were uncovered.

A substantial amount of knowledge about the medieval rural settlements in northern Lebanon, particularly during the 12th and 13th centuries, has been obtained. Documenting and analysing these settlements has not only enhanced scholarly understanding but also enriched the broader historical narrative of Lebanon's landscape.

It is the first study to take advantage of digital technology to document and analyse the cultural heritage of the area studied. The modern era of digital documentation has opened up a world of possibilities for researchers in architecture and archaeology, as everything can now be captured and stored for future analysis and research. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the adapted survey and documentation methods, it is important to note that the built heritage has become a major focus of attention in recent years, with many new technologies and methodologies emerging that aim to provide better documentation and record keeping. By using these methods, it is possible to maintain the different stages of the built heritage over the years, as well as providing support for further comparisons and studies that can be carried out off-site.

Besides trying to find relevant evidence that could lead to new discoveries, using both written sources and work in the field, we reconsidered former scholarly research on rural site identification. A general map, which showed medieval and present-day place names along with basic archaeological features, was used to identify various locations. This '*Carte Generale*' is accompanied by regional and thematic maps. The study includes site details such as preserved infrastructure, 3D documentation, and geo-referencing. The presentation of some site results is done in 2D plans, sections, and elevation drawings using 3D documentation. The accuracy of deductions can be improved by using architectural evidence, especially from world heritage sites. It helps understand the layout, form, and design of the individual sites, and how they were used in the past. By using this evidence, we can better inform and guide the conservation and future use of these sites.

This will also help to preserve the sites for future generations. Visitors will be able to learn more about the history of the different places and appreciate their architecture from the comfort of their own homes. It will also make the locations accessible to a wider audience, allowing them to experience the sites without having to travel to the physical locality. It's also a valuable resource for researchers to compare with other monuments and gain a new understanding of their role in the Middle Ages.

Methodology.

The classification of research methods is as follows:

- **Descriptive and comparative methods.**

Various sources were combined, such as historical sources, medieval documents, travellers' accounts, map evidence, toponymy, archive and satellite photographs, archaeological evidence and oral sources from locals. Through the analysis of written sources and the synthesis of evidence, it clarifies the medieval settlement patterns traces. The collection and integration of data, along with the architectural and archaeological material, yield invaluable insights into the various social, political, religious, and economic aspects of medieval rural settlements sites. A comparison of sites was done based on the similarities and differences mentioned by the scholars, such as the studied case Qulay'āt castle.

- **Analysis and quantitative methods.**

Many results revealed that exporting scholars' knowledge of new technologies has a huge impact and will reach deeper analysis. The process of documentation in castles and world heritage sites adapted by the Syro-Hungarian Archaeological Mission (SHAM), which is based on a special way or processing methodology, was also adapted in this present research. The digital preservation of archaeological features and architectural elements was more and more developed and reached an advanced level in the hardware and software capacity to produce affordable three-dimensional documentation.¹

The Structure from Motion (SfM) is the main chosen 3D documentation technique.² Surveying with the usage of the photogrammetry technology or methodology is offering much reliable and precise information about the properties of surfaces and objects and spaces without physical contact or any harm to the heritage. Furthermore, the model produced, or the final product, is an accurate model after scaling and geo-referencing it.

This method can be defined as the science of producing reliable measurements using photographs or digital photo imagery to locate features in the studied or the surveyed space,

¹ Forte, 2014, pp. 1-29, at 1-2; Kimball, 2016, p. 12; Fernández-Hernandez et al., 2015, p. 128 ; Balletti et al., 2015, p. 217.

² Szeliski, 2011, p. 305; Doneus et al., 2011, p. 87; De Reu et al., 2014, pp. 251-252.

which are practically visible and reachable. Photogrammetry has evolved into a reliable substitution for ground surveying activities when large area mapping is necessary, or even huge surface documentation is needed. Survey crews can be relieved of some of the most time-consuming tasks necessary to produce topographic maps and Digital Terrain Models with this technology. That material includes ortho-rectified imagery, topographic mapping, digital terrain models, 3D point clouds, and various other mapping-related tasks used for engineering and design purposes. All the work made using image-based 3D modelling processing has been done using Agisoft Metashape Professional 3D photogrammetry software.³

To produce a comprehensive and accurate representation of the site, multiple methods such as ground survey techniques, lidar terrestrial scanning methods, photogrammetric methods, or a combination of the three can be used to obtain the data. In addition to the basic information, the 3D model can also provide more detailed data such as alterations, deformations from a statical point of view, or even cracks that may occur after an earthquake, thus enhancing the overall usefulness of the model. Building phases, modifications, putlog holes, joist pockets and niches could also be studied and analysed on the 3D model. It is possible to extract all the necessary details visible during the 3D survey that are relevant to a theoretical or an actual reconstruction.⁴ This method has some advantages and some disadvantages like any other methods.

Photogrammetry's advantages are numerous, aerial imagery provides a permanent record of the conditions as it is existing at the time when the photographs were taken. Terrain data and mapping features can be extracted from the model. In general, photogrammetry can be used in locations that are difficult or impossible to access from the ground, especially in the case of ruins and historical sites. With archaeological surveying, the photogrammetry or the modelling based on photos could show the timeline change set of the trenches by taking a series of pictures after every change. The results could be re-evaluated, and new elements could be detected, which could have been missed by the traditional documentation process. The image stereo model can be re-loaded, measurements verified, and/or additional

³ <http://www.agisoft.com/features/professional-edition/> (accessed March 2019).

⁴ Balletti, 2015, pp. 215-222,

information compiled promptly. This method provides an undestroyed final image, which can highlight the detected features and stratigraphic units during the excavation.

SfM has proved that it is the appropriate technique for documenting standing archaeological and architectural remains in 3D.⁵ This method can be used with normal cameras, professional ones, drones, and even phones. With the use of a drone or a phone, the GPS coordinates will be automatically present and in this case, the model will be already scaled, accurate, precise, and oriented. By using a normal camera or a professional one, the total station measurements beside the GNSS or even normal hand basic measurements can scale the model itself. The total station points can provide not just a scaled model but also one that is geo-referenced and precisely located. This technology is becoming ever more useful for analysing complex sites; it can be used, for example, for clarifying closed openings or any relative additional structures in the space.

Structural deformations can be recognized by this type of modelling, making further measurements or analysis unnecessary. Models can be merged in a way to have the interior space connected with the outside, a so-called general model, with an accuracy within a few millimetres. Vertical and horizontal sections and renders can also be achieved with the extended features of Agisoft Metashape.⁶ The results are then exported to a 2D software such as Autodesk AutoCAD,⁷ Adobe Photoshop⁸, or Illustrator.⁹ The most important thing is that this method provides materials to work on even after the site visit. It is a very important issue, especially when the site is located in a war zone or in a region where it is not always accessible.

The disadvantages of photogrammetry are less but can be dramatic, for example if seasonal weather patterns produce increased wind and cloud cover, hampering one's ability to perform the mission. Solar conditions such as sun or shadows, may also be problematic, as the rendering will be based on the taken pictures, which should be sharp and in good condition. It is impossible to collect measurements, for example, in areas with dark shadows, dense vegetation, snow, water, or overhanging features. The orthographical section drawings

⁵ Willis, Koenig, & Blac, 2016, pp. 1-30.

⁶ Processing 3D models using AgiSoft check [3D model reconstruction: Helpdesk Portal \(freshdesk.com\)](https://www.freshdesk.com/helpdesk/3d-model-reconstruction)

⁷ <https://www.autodesk.com/products/autocad/overview> (accessed September 2013).

⁸ <https://www.adobe.com/products/photoshop.html> (accessed September 2013).

⁹ <https://www.adobe.com/products/illustrator.html> (accessed September 2013).

cannot be skipped or replaced, nor interpreted on-site, since the 3D model shows the visible information at the time of their acquisition. Nevertheless, they may provide a significant amount of additional information about layering and stratigraphy in the case of trenches documentation. The most important and critical point is the processing of the data, and for this, computers with huge capacities are needed.

2. PREVIOUS RESEARCH

European travellers and scholars recognised the remains of the Crusader presence long ago. The links between Europe and the Levant were not completely severed after the destruction of the Crusader states at the end of the 13th century, but the Europeans who travelled to the area had mainly religious or political interests. They were sent either as missionaries or as members of delegations. None of them had much interest in describing the medieval remains of the country, nor did the growing number of Europeans working in the field, who began to arrive in increasing numbers from the second half of the 18th century. An early exception, who left detailed descriptions of some sites and with marked scholarly attitude, was Richard Pococke in the mid-18th century.¹⁰ His work provides insights into the archaeological, historical and cultural aspects of the places he visited, including sites in Lebanon. In the context of medieval Lebanon, Pococke recorded many important sites and provided insightful observations on their historical significance and architectural condition.

It is quite unique in the history of the Levant that one of the earliest scholarly sources for a particular territory, in this case Lebanon, is the main source produced by a local person. In Christian history after the Crusades, the Maronite patriarch Iṣṭifān al-Duwayhī made significant scholarly contributions that provide a compelling narrative and enhance our understanding of Lebanon's complex historical tapestry in the 12th and 13th centuries.¹¹ Although written later, this work upholds the traditions of medieval historical discourse. It weaves together events and insights from a variety of sources, including a vast collection of medieval documents preserved by the Maronite Church.

Some nineteenth-century scholarly visitors provided more extensive and detailed descriptions of medieval sites. One of these was Lewis Burckhardt,¹² who passed through most of the region under study during his travels from Damascus to Mount Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon. His aim was to provide a comprehensive view of the entire Levant, and he paid

¹⁰ Pococke , 1745, pp. 231-336

¹¹ Al-Duwayhī I. , Tārīkh al Azmina al Mukhtaṣar , 1983.

¹² Burckhardt, 1822 .

attention to the cultural, historical and architectural features of the places he visited, describing the ruins of ancient cities, religious sites and the general conditions of the regions he explored. Frederick Walpole was also known for his extensive travels throughout the Middle East, including Lebanon and especially the Syrian coast, where he spent months in the countryside noting the medieval sites.¹³ His work was largely concerned with documenting the historical, archaeological and cultural observations he made during his travels.

In the second part of the nineteenth century, some scholars began to show a more particular interest in sites connected to Crusaders. Guillaume Rey¹⁴ was the first such pioneer to work on the examined territory, not only enumerating the extant structures but also working on their identification on the basis of medieval documents and laying the foundations of a medieval geography of the Crusader Levant.¹⁵ Reinhold Röhricht followed this latter topographical approach to identifying new sites.¹⁶ Unlike others, he was the only early scholar who never had the chance to visit the Levant in person. The study of historical topography received a significant boost from the publication of key document collections, such as the 14 volumes of the *Recueil des historiens des Croisades published from 1841 to 1906*, and the *Cartulaire général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem* compiled and published by Delaville le Roulx from 1894 to 1906.

The French mandate over the region gave a new impetus to the research of the Crusader past. This had a serious portion in René Dussaud's fundamental work entitled *Topographie Historique de la Syrie antique et médiévale*,¹⁷ where we can find the first thematic elaboration of the Crusader states of Antioch and Tripoli. Dussaud's description was much more detailed than the previous works, mentioning additional locations and describing their surroundings too. Another important scholar of this period working in the field was Camille Enlart, who made detailed descriptions of the Crusader religious and civil monuments in his work entitled *Les*

¹³ Walpole, 1851, pp. 26-60.

¹⁴ Rey E. G., 1871.

¹⁵ Rey E. G., 1883, pp. 2-5.

¹⁶ Röhricht, 1887, pp. 195-344.

¹⁷ Dussaud, 1927.

Monuments des Croisés dans le Royaume de Jérusalem.¹⁸ Paul Deschamps was the most prominent mandate-era scholar of the northern Levant working on the Crusader period in the French mandate area. Besides his intensive fieldwork collected the material for his posthumous book *La Défense du comté de Tripoli et de la principauté d'Antioche*.¹⁹ This not only features the most extensive study on rural areas, but it also has the first general map on which the identified rural sites were geographically located. This is the “Carte Générale” which attempts to identify all the village names preserved in Crusader sources. Deschamps' achievements made his work a necessary resource for all future investigations, including this one.

Although Deschamps' work was groundbreaking, most of the identifications were not checked on the field for a long time and no subsequent general survey was conducted that specifically focused on the countryside of the Crusader period in the northern region of Lebanon. Hence, the archaeological and art historical activities that were carried out on the field were targeted towards specific sites or particular aspects of interest. Hassan Salamé-Sarkis's study focused on Tripoli and its immediate surroundings; Karin Bartl conducted a brief field survey in the western portion of the 'Akkār plain; and Professor Anis Chaaya mainly worked on larger fortified sites such as Jubayl, Smār Jubayl, and 'Anfah. It is worth mentioning the recently started joint excavation project between Holy Spirit Kaslik University in Lebanon and Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Hungary which started working on a Crusader- period fortified site in Menjez. It is the first excavation in the Northern Lebanese countryside targeting a lesser fortified site which was very likely an agricultural and administrative centre.

Through an exploration of historical records and visits on the field, it becomes apparent that the impact of the Crusaders extends beyond military structures to include the religious architecture of the area. The number of medieval rural ecclesiastic sites is striking in Lebanon and usually they are the sole remains of the medieval villages.

¹⁸ Enlart C. , 1928.

¹⁹ Deschamps P. , 1973.

In recent decades, there has been a significant increase in scholarly interest in the medieval churches of northern Lebanon. Erica Dodd,²⁰ Nada Hélou,²¹ Lévon Nordiguián²² and Matt Immerzeel²³ are among the researchers who have taken on the task of unravelling the secrets of these religious sites. Their detailed analysis, focusing in particular on the painted churches, has provided historical insights that have enriched the state of knowledge about the Middle Ages. The intricate murals and frescoes found in these churches serve as windows into the religious, cultural and social dimensions of the Crusader period. These researches involved dozen of ecclesiastic sites in the north and provide essential data on the medieval countryside. Recently, a number of research projects have been published on the Qādīshā valley, such as the monasteries and the partially excavated monastery of Dayr al-Ṣalīb.²⁴

The chronological panorama of historical studies pertaining to the Crusader period in northern Lebanon reveals intriguing intervals of scholarly engagement. On the other hand, there was a significant time gap in the field of historical studies between Jean Richard's first great historical works on the County of Tripoli before 1187,²⁵ which relied on Latin sources, and Kevin Jame' Lewis's recent work on the succession of the counts of Tripoli during the 12th century, published in 2017, which offers fresh perspectives on the political and social dynamics of the Crusader period in 12th century Lebanon.²⁶

Gathering data on medieval sites in the northern region of Lebanon and its surroundings requires a methodological approach that combines precision and comprehensiveness. Fieldwork and field surveys stand out as highly effective methods due to the significant amount of valuable information they can provide. Although older periods were their main focus, short surveys conducted on the Plain of 'Akkār, both on its northern²⁷ and southern sides,²⁸ have brought to

²⁰ Dodd E. , 2004.

²¹ Hélou, 1999, pp. 13- 36; Hélou, 2007.

²² Nordiguián & Voisin, 1999.

²³ Immerzeel M. , 2009.

²⁴ Major B. , 2024- 2025, pp. 38-63; Győrfi & Vajda, 2024- 2025, pp. 64-69; Grynaeus, 2024-2025, pp. 70-73; Harsányi & Galambos, 2024- 2025, pp. 74-97; Hélou, 2024-2025, pp. 98-134 Nasr, 2024-2025, pp. 165-174

²⁵ Richard J. , 1945.

²⁶ Lewis, 2017.

²⁷ Maqdissi & Thalmann, 1989, pp. 98-101.

²⁸ Bartl, 1999, pp. 29-33.

light important details about the medieval landscape. Intensive surveys in the Gap of Homs ²⁹ and its foreground,³⁰ along with explorations near the Nahr al-Kabīr al-Shimālī,³¹ have further enriched our understanding of the coastal countryside during the medieval period. However, the most useful reference in an adjacent zone of often similar features is the work done by the Syro-Hungarian Archaeological Mission on the rural hinterland of the Syrian coastal region.³²

Brief overview on the previous research conducted on medieval pottery in Lebanon.

Most studied sites have been identified by their architectural remains but in spite of the relative scarcity of actual archaeological excavations, we do have some knowledge on the characteristic ceramic repertoire of the 12th and 13th centuries at least. Pottery, being the foremost indicator of medieval occupation, assumed special significance in the identification of sites and has been employed as an indicator in this thesis too.

Tripoli emerges as a preeminent medieval site in Lebanon, acknowledged as the best-published Crusader site presently available. Hassan Salame-Sarkis was the first to conduct a series of meticulously documented excavations in North Lebanon between 1971 and 1975, which unearthed significant medieval pottery assemblages. Various sites, including the castle of Raymond of Saint-Gilles, St. Jean du Mont Pelerin Church, al-Mīnā, St. Elie Bqūfa Church 'Ihdin, and Rabbit Island, revealed churches, and other buildings, as well as an extensive collection of artifacts, including coins, inscriptions, and pottery spanning the Fatimid and Crusader periods.³³ Salame-Sarkis's integrated approach, combining archaeological and textual evidence, enriches the understanding of the sites' functions.³⁴ It became evident from these early works that the northern areas of Lebanon had a very similar range of pottery types as the rest of the Crusader dominated regions of the Levant. Beside the large number of non-glazed pottery,

²⁹ Haïdar-Boustani , et al., 2005-2006, pp. 9-38; Haïdar-Boustani , et al., 2007-2009, pp. 7-49

³⁰ Philip, et al., 2005, pp. 21-42; Philip & Newson, 2014, pp. 33-39.

³¹ Michaudel & Haydar, 2008, pp. 303-317; Michaudel & Haydar, 2010, pp. 337-338; Michaudel & Haydar, 2012, pp. 315-317.

³² Major B. , 2015.

³³ Salame-Sarkis, H. , 1980.

³⁴ *Ibid* pp.96-156.

the most characteristic types were the yellow and green glazed slipwares and the *sgraffiato*, which started as monochrome yellow or green in the 12th century but became dominated by polychrome examples by the 13th century. If having any decoration, the none-glazed vessels were covered on their exterior by white slip (mainly in the case of pincers); were treated with a comb-like tool or belonged to the category of the Hand-Made Geometrically Painted Ware.

The excavation at Tall 'Arqā, situated about 20 km north of Tripoli, uncovered another series of medieval pottery. Initially focused on Bronze Age remains, the investigation by Jean-Paul Thalmann in the 1970s revealed pottery dating to the Middle Ages.³⁵ Suzy Hakimian and Salamé-Sarkis conducted a thorough study and publication of this pottery,³⁶ also adding a number of *pseudo-celadon* fragments to the pottery types used in the region during the 13th century. Besides the two seminal works in or in the vicinity of medieval urban centres, relatively little work has been done on the pottery of medieval rural sites, however the publications hitherto do not reflect any considerable difference in the variety of pottery used.³⁷

In the Qādīshā valley, medieval ceramics were discovered in caves by the Groupe d'Études et de Recherches Souterraines au Liban (GERSL) indicating diverse functions from hideouts and hermitages to military posts.³⁸ The Qādīshā caves yielded evidence dating to the Middle Ages, with distinct types of glazed and non-glazed wares,³⁹ similar to those found in Tripoli.⁴⁰ Other medieval lesser sites in the region where medieval pottery was studied include 'Anfah by Homsy-Gottwalles,⁴¹ Balamand,⁴² Rashkidda⁴³ and Tyre as outlined by Antaki-Masson.⁴⁴ The excavations of the Lebano-Hungarian Archaeological Mission at the rural centre of Menjez found the same types of medieval pottery, however, the quantity the *sgraffiato* pottery

³⁵ Thalmann J.-P. , 1978.

³⁶ Hakimian & Salamé-Sarkis, 1988, pp. 1-52.

³⁷ *Ibid*, pp.3-30.

³⁸ GERSL: Speleology: Caving Lebanon.

³⁹ Baroudi F. , 1989, pp. 6-13

⁴⁰ Salame-Sarkis, H. , 1980, p. 157

⁴¹ Homsy-Gottwalles, 2016, pp. 313-340.

⁴² Homsy-Gottwalles, 2012a, pp. 413-435.

⁴³ Makowski, 2019, pp. 209-239.

⁴⁴ Antaki-Masson, 2012, pp. 205-222.

was surprisingly low, which might indicate the reduced habitation or even complete abandonment of the site by the 13th century.⁴⁵

The surveys provided evidence that the ceramic repertoire of the rural hinterland of the North of Lebanon is identical to the huge assemblages of Tripoli and 'Arqā without the luxury ceramics. It also is very similar to the ceramics repertoire and characteristics of the Syrian coastline.⁴⁶

Together, these studies form a comprehensive body of research that continues to shape and inform current investigations in the field. They not only unveil the physical remains of fortifications and settlements but also contribute to a broader understanding of the socio-economic dynamics, agricultural practices, and trade systems that characterised the Crusader period in northern Lebanon. The thorough documentation of structures, coupled with advancements in technology, ensures that these surveys become not just records but comprehensive narratives of a historical era.

⁴⁵ Major & Kahwaji, 2022, pp. 313-317.

⁴⁶ Major B. , 2015, p. 25.

3. SOURCES

3.1. Historical sources.

In order to gain a fuller understanding of its historical context during the Middle Ages, it is necessary to examine the historical, topographical and social features of the northern Lebanese mountain and coastal regions as they are presented in the written sources. These sources fall into two main categories. The first comprises medieval sources, including Arabic historical, topographical and geographical works, as well as chronicles and surviving charters written in Latin and occasionally medieval French. The second category was substituted after the fall of the Crusader states by the accounts of European travellers.

3.1.1. Medieval sources.

The bulk of medieval sources concerning the settlements and their history in the coastal region were written in Arabic and Latin and far less references appeared in Old French and Syriac too. Two main groups may be recognized among the Arabic sources, the first comprising historical narratives in the pure sense while the second includes descriptive and geographical accounts. Ibn al-Qalānisī⁴⁷ and Ibn al-Athīr⁴⁸ are considered the two main Arabic sources for the history of the Crusader period. Abu'l-Fiḍā',⁴⁹ being both a historian and a geographer, provides detailed information about sultan Qalāwūn's raids on Tripoli in 1286.⁵⁰ Ibn al-Furāt's⁵¹ chronicle gives a highly detailed account of Mamluk history. These are mainly the most useful Arabic chronicles, not only by providing the necessary data for a general historical framework but also

⁴⁷ Ibn al-Qalānisī, *Dzayl = Dzayl ta'riḥ Dimashq*.

⁴⁸ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil = al-Kāmil fi'l-ta'riḥ*.

⁴⁹ Abu'l-Fiḍā', *al-Mukhtaṣar = al-Mukhtaṣar fī akhbār al-bashar*.

⁵⁰ *Ibid* pp. 23-24

⁵¹ Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'riḥ = Ayyubids, Mamlukes and Crusaders: Selections from the Ta'riḥ al-Duwal wa'l-Mulūk of Ibn al-Furāt; Ibn al-Furāt, Ta'riḥ = Ta'riḥ ibn al-Furāt*. Vol. 7.; Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'riḥ = Ta'riḥ ibn al-Furāt*. Vol. 8.

by giving valuable details on elements of the rural settlements. Ibn al-Athīr,⁵² Abū Shāma,⁵³ and Ibn Wāṣil⁵⁴ are responsible for some of the most informative dynastic chronicles, which serve as essential additions.

The royal biographies of Saladin by Bahā al-Dīn Ibn Shaddād⁵⁵ and those of the Mamluk sultans by ‘Izz al-Dīn Ibn Shaddād⁵⁶ and Ibn ‘Abdazzāhir⁵⁷ provide important data for this study. Ibn ‘Abdazzāhir’s chronicle, written while he was secretary of Baybars and Qalawūn, is also an important source providing a detailed description of the capture of Ḥadath in the mountains of Lebanon,⁵⁸ although his version of the event description differs from those of the later Christian Arab chronicles of al-Duwayhī and Ibn al-Qilā‘ī.⁵⁹

Eastern sources include both geographers and travellers. The geographical dictionary of Yāqūt is the most instructive on settlements of all types among the Arabic works written during the 12th and 13th centuries.⁶⁰ Equally important as this vast work are Ibn Shaddād’s written volumes on the ‘historical topography’ of the former military provinces of Aleppo, Homs, and Lebanon.⁶¹ Al-’Idrīsī,⁶² al-Dimashqī,⁶³ and Abu’l-Fidā’⁶⁴ present a wide range of data regarding the geography of the coastal region. On the other hand, their information was not extremely thorough, especially since most of them completely neglected to describe the mountain area. Literature relating to North Lebanon during from the end of the 13th and through to the 15th

⁵² Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Ta’rīkh al-bāhir* = *al-Ta’rīkh al-bāhir fī al-dawla al-atābakiyya*.

⁵³ Abū Shāma, *al-Rawḍatayn* = *Kitāb al-rawḍatayn fī akhbār aldawlatayn*. Abū Shāma, *Dzayl* = *Tarājim rijāl al-qarnayn as-sādis wa’l-sābi‘ al-ma’rūf bi’l-dzayl ‘alā al-rawdatayn*.

⁵⁴ Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij* = *Mufarrij al-kurūb fī akhbār Banī Ayyūb*.

⁵⁵ Bahā al-Dīn, *al-Nawādir* = *al-Nawādir al-sultāniyya wa’l-mahāsīn al-Yūsufiyya*.

⁵⁶ Ibn Shaddād, *Ta’rīkh* = *Ta’rīkh al-Malik al-Zāhir*

⁵⁷ Ibn ‘Abdazzāhir, *Tashrīf* = *Tashrīf al-ayyām wa’l-uṣūr fī sirat al-Malik al-Mansūr*

⁵⁸ Baroudi F. , 1989, p. 8; Salibi K. , 1959, pp. 134-135

⁵⁹ Abi Aoun, Baroudy, & Chaouche , 1994, pp. 85-87

⁶⁰ Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-buldān*.

⁶¹ Ibn Shaddād, *al-A’lāq al-khaṭīra* = *al-A’lāq al-khaṭīra fī dzikr umarā’ al-Shām wa’l-Jazīra; Ta’rīkh Lubnān* = *al-A’lāq al-khaṭīra fī dzikr umarā’ al-Shām wa’l-Jazīra. Ta’rīkh Lubnān wa’l-Urdun wa-Filasṭīn*.

⁶² al-Idrīsī, *Nuzhat al-mushtāq* = *Nuzhat al-mushtāq fī ikhtirāq al-āfāq*.

⁶³ al-Dimashqī, *Kitāb nukhbat al-dahr* = *Kitāb nukhbat al-dahr fī ‘ajā’ib al-barr wa’l-baḥr*.

⁶⁴ Abu’l-Fidā’, *Taqwīm al-buldān* = *Kitāb taqwīm al-buldān*.

century, is scarce. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's journey includes information concerning the coastal territories after the Crusaders' expulsion.⁶⁵

The history of Maronite Patriarch Iṣṭifān al-Duwayhī, gives us valuable information about the history of the Lebanese coast in the 12th and 13th centuries. This source not only includes a vast collection of medieval documents (usually written in Syriac language) from the Maronite church but is also a work that builds on the traditions of historical writing from that era. Although al-Duwayhī belongs to a later period, his work has managed to preserve numerous medieval documents that were only preserved in his writing.

Medieval Latin and French historical sources, contain significantly less information relating to Northern Lebanon than their Arabic counterparts. An exception, however, is William of Tyre's chronicle, which was the most detailed and inclusive chronicle of the 12th century, not only rivalling but overriding the Arabic chronicles in a number of aspects. Despite its focus on events in the Kingdom of Jerusalem, it is an extremely valuable source of information for the coastal Syrian and Lebanese regions. On the other hand, the same cannot be said about its continuations and the Latin and French chronicles that summarize events after 1184. Thus, there is a lack of information on the Latin side compared to the Arabic sources in the post-Ḥattīn period. It is worth mentioning that certain sources, such as the Rothelin Continuations of William of Tyre⁶⁶ or the Chronicle of the Templar of Tyre,⁶⁷ provide not only historical data but, also, in certain instances, details of settlements.

During the Crusader era, only a few pilgrimage writers made their way to the Syrian coast, since the majority of holy places were in Palestine. Consequently, it receives little attention in pilgrimage literature during the Crusader era. Wilbrand von Oldenburg⁶⁸ and

⁶⁵ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Rihla*.

⁶⁶ *The Rothelin Continuation = Crusader Syria in the Thirteenth Century. The Rothelin Continuation of the History of William of Tyr with part of the Eracles or Acre text.*

⁶⁷ *The Templar of Tyr, Part III of the 'Deeds of the Cypriots'.*

⁶⁸ Oldenburg, 1983, *Itinerarium Terrae Sanctae*.

Burchard of Mount Sion⁶⁹ were the most prominent witnesses among the limited number of travellers, and they both provided a comprehensive account of the coastal area they encountered.

Compared to their Muslim counterparts, Frankish landlords appear to have paid greater attention to the countryside. This attention to the countryside was not only reflected in the infrastructure built in these regions, but also, in the abundance of documents dealing with landed property. Although many of these land documents have been lost, those that remain are the most significant sources for rural settlements of the period. The most valuable collections of such documents are the *Cartulaire* edited by Delaville le Roulx⁷⁰ and the *Regesta* of Reinhold Röhrich.⁷¹ These form the base for the English version collection and translation that can be reached online under the name: *The Crusades Regesta*.⁷² In the same period, lands were certainly registered in the territories under Muslim control, but the documents relating to this do not normally survive. Concerning the Mamluk period, the Muslims dedicated particular attention to the specifics of the treaties they signed with the Franks.

Among the most extensive collections of treaties are those found in the chancery guide of al-Qalqashandī.⁷³ This is characterized by its high degree of precision as he has respected or followed the chronological order of events. Supplemented by the texts surviving in the biography of sultan Qalāwūn written by Ibn ‘Abdazzāhir, concerning infrastructure, described in detail several rural regions of the Syrian coast.⁷⁴ The absence of equivalent Latin evidence is rewarded by the rich geographical literature in Arabic sources.

⁶⁹ Sion, 1984, *Descriptio Terrae Sanctae*.

⁷⁰ *Cartulaire* = *Cartulaire général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers de Saint- Jean de Jérusalem (1100-1310)*.

⁷¹ *Cartulaire* = *Cartulaire général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers de Saint- Jean de Jérusalem (1100-1310)*;

⁷² [Revised Regesta Regni Hierosolymitani Database | Revised Regesta Regni Hierosolymitani Database \(crusades-regesta.com\)](http://crusades-regesta.com)

⁷³ al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ* = *Ṣubḥ al-a'shā fī ṣinā'at al-inshā*.

⁷⁴ Major B. , 2015

3.1.2. Travellers' accounts.

Even though Palestine attracted more travellers than any other region of the Levant, pilgrimages continued along the Syrian coast passing through Lebanon. Because of the growing academic interest in these themes, historical accounts of ancient monuments and their history became more thorough over time. It was the relatively full and detailed descriptions of Magry,⁷⁵ Henry Maundrell,⁷⁶ and Dandini,⁷⁷ who presented the written evidence of the 15th and 17th centuries. Magry adopted a similar approach to the Arab geographers, offering detailed descriptions of each village or city in a dictionary format. Dandini's account describes Mount Lebanon, within which the history, as well as the culture of the region under study. These descriptions were followed by Richard Pococke,⁷⁸ Mariti,⁷⁹ Egmont,⁸⁰ and Thévenot,⁸¹ throughout the 18th century. However, the knowledge possessed by these travellers is slightly different from that of the previous century.

The depiction of the topography in the northern mountainous regions in these descriptions is remarkably consistent, containing useful information about the medieval monuments of the coastal region, many of which have now disappeared or have been seriously altered. With the development of transport and the rising interest from Europe in the Near East, the sources from the first half of the 19th century provide us with a wealth of new information. Urquhart,⁸² one of the travellers, speaks of the development of the economy of Mount Lebanon, and lists animals and plant species found in the North.⁸³ European travellers were deterred from entering the mountains of Jabal Anṣāriyya before the middle of the 19th century because of the unstable political situation.⁸⁴ Following the groundbreaking and highly informative travelogue

⁷⁵ Magry, 1655

⁷⁶ Maundrell, 1697

⁷⁷ Dandini, 1927

⁷⁸ Pococke, 1745

⁷⁹ Mariti, 1791

⁸⁰ Egmont, 1759

⁸¹ Thévenot, 1727

⁸² Urquhart, 1860

⁸³ *Ibid* 1860, pp.155-160

⁸⁴ The instability of the region was responsible in a large part for the lack of information on the monuments of the mountains. As late as 1865 Petermann was forced to continue his trip by sea towards the north from Latakia because of the violence that spread from the mountains. Petermann 1865: II/1-3.

of Frederick Walpole,⁸⁵ foreigners, primarily missionaries, also began to venture into this remote area.⁸⁶ Walpole's account of his travels from Tripoli to Tartūs was highly regarded because of the meticulous attention he paid to even the smallest details, including the number of bridges that he encountered. The writings of missionaries, however, make little mention of medieval monuments as their main objective was to convert the local population.⁸⁷

In the footsteps of his predecessor, Constantin-François de Chasse-boeuf, Comte de Volney, a French philosopher and historian, also embarked on extensive travels during the late 18th century. He documented his personal experiences and observations during his time in the Middle East. In his work, Volney takes the reader on a journey through the Levant, offering a detailed and comprehensive account of his travels, including descriptions of Tripoli and northern Lebanon in the late 18th century. It is noticeable that Volney described Tripoli as one of the greatest cities along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. Moreover, he mentioned the city's busy port and diversified population, including different religions and ethnic backgrounds, including Muslims, and Christians. Along with his observations, he also points out the diverse communities residing in the region, including the Maronite Christians who are considered a significant religious group. In addition to his historical observations of the city, he provides a detailed account of its architecture, with a special focus on the numerous mosques, churches, castles, and ruins scattered throughout the area.

In the 19th century, Alphonse de Lamartine, a distinguished French writer, poet, and diplomat, extensively explored and described contemporary Tripoli in his works.⁸⁸ The Arabic source that deals with North Lebanon during this period is the work of Ramadān bin Mūsā al-'Utayfi.⁸⁹ Although he did not wander in the mountainous area of North Lebanon, al-'Utayfi gives us a glimpse of the city of Tripoli, its river, houses, mosques, streets, and castle.⁹⁰ There is a lack of information about the mountain area, but the description of the city shows what it

⁸⁵ Walpole, 1851

⁸⁶ Porter, 1854, pp. 649-693; Robinson E. , 1856; also see Salibi & Khoury, 1995

⁸⁷ Salibi & Khoury, 1995

⁸⁸ Lamartine, 1835

⁸⁹ Al Munaggid, 1979.

⁹⁰ *Ibid* 1979, p. 1321

looked like five centuries after the Crusades but at a time when many of its medieval remains were still standing.

The sources presented above pose certain challenges. According to Iṣṭifān al-Duwayhī and Ibn Qilāʿī, there exist varying accounts of the same historical events. Some historians appear to be influenced by their religious or political affiliations, such as William of Tyre supporting the Crusaders or Ibn al-Qalānisī (c.1071-1160) advocating for the Seljuqs of Damascus. The medieval history of North Lebanon contains gaps as each historian wrote from their contemporary perspective, resulting in various narratives. While Arab historians like Abu'l-Fiḍāʾ and al-Qalqashandī offer an overview of the medieval period, it is important to rely on local Lebanese historians for detailed information about the North. Ibn ʿAbdazzāhir's work stands out as a comprehensive exception among Arab documentary evidence, providing both general descriptions of the period and detailed accounts of specific events, like the attack on al-Ḥadath. It is crucial to highlight that geographer from the 11th and 12th centuries contributed significantly to medieval topographical knowledge, even if there were occasional repetitions in locations and distances. Furthermore, post-medieval sources play a vital role in completing the overall picture, offering additional topographic information that was lacking in earlier works.

3.2. Some observations on the toponymy.

Historical approach is quite challenging because the necessary documents are rare, and they fail to meet the requirements of an exhaustive investigation. The process of identifying place names that have been preserved from medieval documents and comparing them to present-day names involves a comprehensive evaluation of the toponymy. Most of the earlier scholars who worked on the identifications, including Rey, Röhrich, Dussaud, and Deschamps, were not very well-versed in the Arabic language or did not read it at all. Therefore, they were forced to rely heavily on maps that had various transcriptions. Despite recognizing some locations, there are still several that are yet to be found, and the accuracy of the identified ones is often questionable. During the Crusades, many medieval sites were given both an Arabic and a Medieval Latin name. Not only can the Arabic name differ significantly from the Medieval Latin name, but a

single site can have several variants in Arabic alone. Identifying sites is a challenge, making it difficult to produce a detailed map showing their exact location. Having an accurately transcribed place name has been a great help in identifying modern sites that could potentially reveal medieval sites.

The Franks used several methods to represent Arabic Names in Latin or French. One of the new challenges that arise when copyists report places in different forms and spellings in the same document is the creation of new difficulties. Sometimes they took over Greek or Roman names and modernised them like such as “Giblet, le Boutron, la Triple.” Then they translated in their way as the location, the community, the city, or each region suggested. Locating Frankish names proves challenging due to the lack of specific or delimited references in the charters. Some examples that illustrate the difficulties are enumerated in the following paragraph.

While ‘Imād al-Dīn Zankī, atabeg of Mosul,⁹¹ was experiencing a career boost, the Principality of Antioch, and to some extent Tripoli, were dealing with a succession crisis that persisted for six years from 1130 to 1136.⁹² The King of Jerusalem besieged in Ba‘rīn or Montferrand Frankish name and Rafaniyya, the only fortified works held by Franks northeast of Buqay‘a, the eastern border of the County lacked any real defence against the Syrian invasion. The count of Tripoli had to ensure, after this disaster, a strong strategic position in the Ḥomṣ gap, after losing these two places. The count entrusted the border region to the Knights of Saint John, the Hospitallers. This was because, on their own, they were able to block the way to the emirs of Homs and Ḥamā and aim to get back some lost territories. A charter of 1142 officially establishes the basis of a “religious principality” in favour of the Hospitallers. Another Charter dating from 1143 confirmed the Charter of the previous year while mentioning new donations. With its establishment, the principality covered a broad expanse that encompassed practically the whole region of Nahr al-Kabīr, both sides, and even some parts of the Syrian interior. The northern part of Lebanon was included in the Hospitaller territory, which bordered Hirmil and the seigniory of ‘Akkār.

⁹¹ Stevenson, 1907, pp. 122-152

⁹² Asbridge, 2003, pp. 29-47

Thus, most of the donations mentioned in the two charters, as well as certain donations made to the same Hospitallers, in other circumstances, seem to relate to locations in north Lebanon. Reproducing the charters that have been indicated and accurately marking the recognized sites on the map can make it much easier to understand the different settlements.

Upon reviewing the 1143 Charter, it was discovered that the third donation, specifically referred to as "*Casale Helmedel, cum villanis et pertinentiis suis, prope Guibelacard quod dedit Ribod...*"⁹³ was given to the village of al-Majdal, which is situated about 5.65 km north of the 'Akkār al-'Atīqā castle. The name Majdal is of Aramaic origin, (magdla) a high place for watching and guarding.⁹⁴ The location forms a strategic position of primary importance on a hill overlooking the Nahr Ustuwān. Cézair Mourani mentions the remains of a church and bigger ashlar that might relate to an earlier church, which could be still *in-situ* dating back to medieval times.⁹⁵ As it is mentioned: "... *et ex alia parte montanae casale Modena, cum villanis et pertinentiis suis quod W. Ermengardus donavit...*"⁹⁶ The name was reported in the form of "*Medera*" by Eugène de Rozière.⁹⁷ According to Dussaud, "*Medera*" hides one of the many "*Mezraa*", a farmhouse in the area.⁹⁸ According to Deschamps, the "*Gélis map*" shows a place known as "*Mazraa*", under the name "*Mezraat*", 13 km northeast of 'Akkār. Rey mentions that perhaps it can be identified with the village of Mazra'at on the eastern slope of Jabal 'Akkār.⁹⁹ The site, stated in the information that we have just reported, bears today the name of "*Mazraat Balda*" contrary to what was mentioned by Pere Cézair "*Mazraat Ennahriyé*".¹⁰⁰ It is located east of *Khraybit al Jundī* on the second road connecting Ḥalbā and al-Kubayyāt, passing through Dayr-Jannīn and Tībū tower.

⁹³ Charter of 1143, *Privilegium Raimundi Comitis dans Assises de Jérusalem II P.*, pp. 509-511

⁹⁴ Fraiha, 1982, p. 311

⁹⁵ Mourany, 2006, pp. 68-69

⁹⁶ Charter of 1143, *Privilegium Raimundi Comitis dans Assises de Jérusalem II P.*, pp. 509-511

⁹⁷ Cartulaire de l'église du Saint Sépulcre de Jérusalem, 1894, N97, RRH n. 218; Deschamps P. , 1973, p. 187

⁹⁸ Dussaud, 1927, p. 87

⁹⁹ Rey E. G., 1883, p. 369

¹⁰⁰ Mourany, 2006, p. 69

"*Gaustinam insuper, quae dicitur Loisan, quam Raimundus de Raisac dedit.*"¹⁰¹ The "*Gaustina Loisan*" donation made by Raymond de Raisac to the Hospitallers of Saint -John is an unlocated position, according to Deschamps. Looking through the region of donation and based on the Frankish sources, *gastina* (Old French *gastine*) means the same as *khirba*, an abandoned or unoccupied land, often referring to ruins of an earlier settlement. *Karm* in arabic language relate to the grapevines, as in 'Ayn Karim, Tulkarm. 'Asfūr means bird, oisan most probably is oiseau in French Karim 'Asfūr is located 1.74 km southeast of the 'Arqā site, could be the official site.

The Felicium, called Qal'at al-Falīz,¹⁰² appears on the map *Carte Générale* of Paul Deschamps on the Syrian side of Nahr al-Kabīr al-Janūbī, although it is in fact on the southern side. Dussaud recognized the remains of the fortified castle, Qal'at Menjez, located south of Tall Kalakh on the right of Nahr al- Kabīr.

Cormonium is mentioned by Riley-Smith and says it belonged to the count of Tripoli.¹⁰³ Deschamps proposed the location named Kharnūbiyya, between Qulay'āt and Qal'at al-Falīz.¹⁰⁴ From the description of Deschamps, this should today be the place named Kharnūbī, located approximately 9 km west of Felicium. Cézare should be Kfar Nūn, located 2.5 km east of Felicium, for two main reasons. The location was first mentioned in the charter of 1127, after Felicium, and it is further away than Kfar Nūn, which is 2 km east of the castle. Second phonetically, apart from the letter "f", Comonium is much closer to Kfar Nūn than to Kharnūbī. By mentioning some of the archaeological remains left by the Frankish period, it provides evidence to support the proposal.

About *Cendiana*, many locations bear the same name in Syria as well as in North Lebanon. Dussaud and Rey agree on the "*Cendina super flumen*" in 'Akkār contrarily to Deschamps who indicates it to the south of Crac des Chevaliers in Syria. Following the proposed location of Dussaud Sindiyānat, located 6.22 km northeast of 'Akkār. The village is currently

¹⁰¹ Charter of 1143, *Privilegium Raimundi Comitis dans Assises de Jérusalem II P.* pp. 509-511

¹⁰² Ibn Furat, *The history*, vol.XI part I

¹⁰³ Riley-Smith J. , 1967, p. 494

¹⁰⁴ Deschamps P. , 1973, p. 186

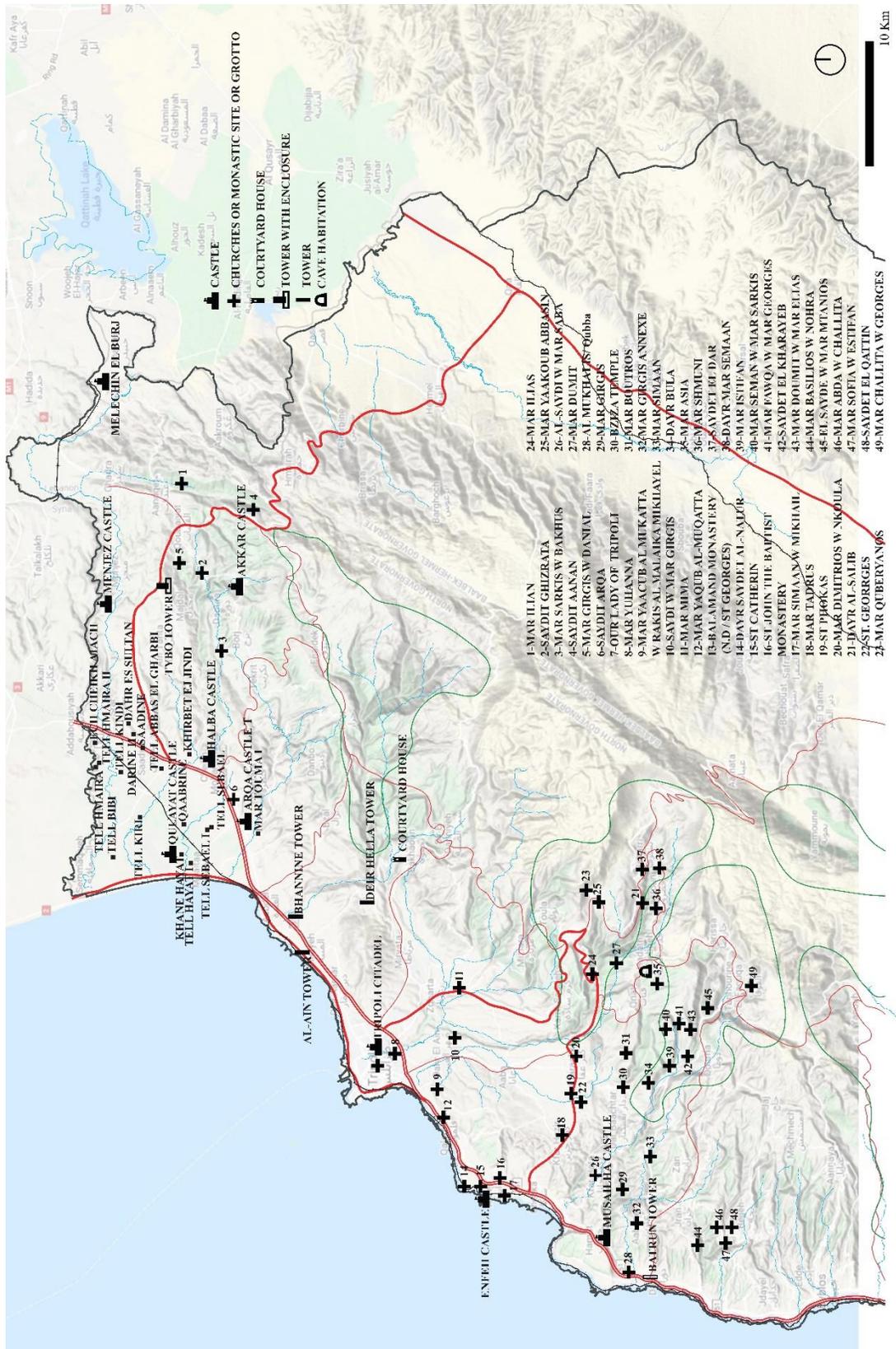
populated by Sunni Muslims, but the ruins of an old Maronite monastery and a chapel dating from the Frankish period are still present.¹⁰⁵

In the Latin text, the toponym Coliath appeared in multiple forms, including a *castellum Couliath*, which was referred to as Gouliath, Gouliad, or Coulicath, as well as the villa Coliath.¹⁰⁶ A question was raised, knowing that the Castle of Qulay‘āt is already defined. Do these variations point to the same monument or there should be another spot to be defined? Knowing that *castellum* can mean village (especially when referring to places such as Bethany or Emmaus, which are called *castellum* in the New Testament) or castle (*castrum*). Villa, like *ville* in medieval French and *vill* in medieval English, means village or town (but not city/*civitas*). In Qulay‘āt, however, it is possible that a village and a castle were side by side. Max Van Berchem mentions that Coliath appears in the donation charter of the Count of Tripoli to the Hospitallers on 8 February 1128, but he mentions that in the Latin text “*villam Coliath*” does not designate the fortress known as “Qulay‘āt” on a small hill in the plain of ‘Akkār monitoring from far the maritime plain.¹⁰⁷ A huge work was done to recognize the different names and compare the present-day day names with the medieval names of the different settlements. Through a comprehensive analysis of names currently in use and their historical counterparts from the medieval period, which were cited by numerous scholars and referenced in official records, the distinct locales were gradually identified as referring to the same village or region. This shows that the work of identifying the sites and thus producing an extended map is difficult and complex.

¹⁰⁵ Mourany, 2006, p. 70

¹⁰⁶ Deschamps P. , 1973, pp. 311-312; Rey E. G., 1883, p. 131

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*



Map 1_ Showing some of the rural settlements in the studied region located on QGIS software

4. GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL FRAME IN NORTH LEBANON

4.1. Geographical Setting.

Situated in the central part of the eastern Mediterranean coastline, the county of Tripoli includes the southern part of the Syrian coast and present-day northern Lebanon.¹⁰⁸ The northern Lebanese coastline, which extends for about 73 km alongside the Mediterranean Sea, is characterized by an exceptional diversity of topographical features. The originality of the terrain is linked to the overall geological structure of the Levant, which is dominated by the mountains in the coastal region.

The distance between the Gulf of 'Aqaba and southern Turkey is almost 1000 km, marking the boundary between the African (west) and Arab (east) tectonic plates. Mount Lebanon or Jabal Lubnān makes up the natural wall dividing the Levantine coast from its interior on the Lebanese side. The name *Mons Libanus* was used to refer to this location in the medieval era. This name was given to the mountain range above Tripoli that extended north of the Kisriwān mountains. During the Middle Ages, these mountains included Jubbat al-Munayṭira, Bilād Jubayl, and Bilād al-Batrūn.

This study's geographical scope is fairly broad, including the north governorate and the 'Akkār Governorate in modern-day northern Lebanon. The region is bounded by the Nahr al-Kabīr al-Janūbī to the north, while to the east it is delimited by the Biqā' Governorate, with the Orontes or al-'Āṣī river serving as its border. In the south, the range of the Mount Lebanon Governorate region, and to the west, the Mediterranean Sea bounds it. Due to the substantial amount of humidity originating from the sea that is carried inland towards the coastal mountains, a multitude of rivers are formed, and these rivers then discharge their waters back into the Mediterranean Sea.

The Nahr al-Kabīr al-Janūbī is one of the most important perennial rivers in the region. In addition to supplying water to the coastal plains for agricultural purposes, this river also plays

¹⁰⁸ Major B. , 2015, pp. 3-4

a vital role in connecting the mountains through its deeply cut valleys. Among all the countries in the Middle East, Lebanon has the highest number of rivers per square kilometre, making it a unique geographical location. Nahr al-Jawz, Nahr Qādīshā, and Nahr al-Bārid are the most important seasonal rivers located in the same northern region. Tripoli was known well for its abundant water supply from Jabal Lubnān. As Volney observed, when writing of the rivers in Syria and Lebanon:

*“If the rains and melted snow give them some importance in winter, their course is only to be discovered, during the rest of the year, by the round stones and fragments of rocks with which their beds are filled. They are nothing but torrents and cascades; and it may be conceived that, from the proximity of the mountains, among which they rise to the sea, their waters have no time to collect in long valleys, to form rivers.”*¹⁰⁹

The mountains and coastline were not the only distinctive features of this region, as several low-lying fertile regions also existed that underwent intensive agricultural development during the Middle Ages. Extending west of the Homs Gap on both sides of the Nahr al-Kabīr al-Janūbī, is the wide plain of ‘Akkār. This serves as a division between the Jabal Lubnān and the Jabal Anṣāriyya. In the heart of the Gap of Homs, there are various stunning landscapes, including the hilly countryside of Ṣāfītā to the north, the Jabal ‘Akkār itself to the east, Mount Lebanon to the south, and the Mediterranean Sea to the west. The name Jūn was frequently used to refer to the westernmost part of this plain that was situated beside the sea.

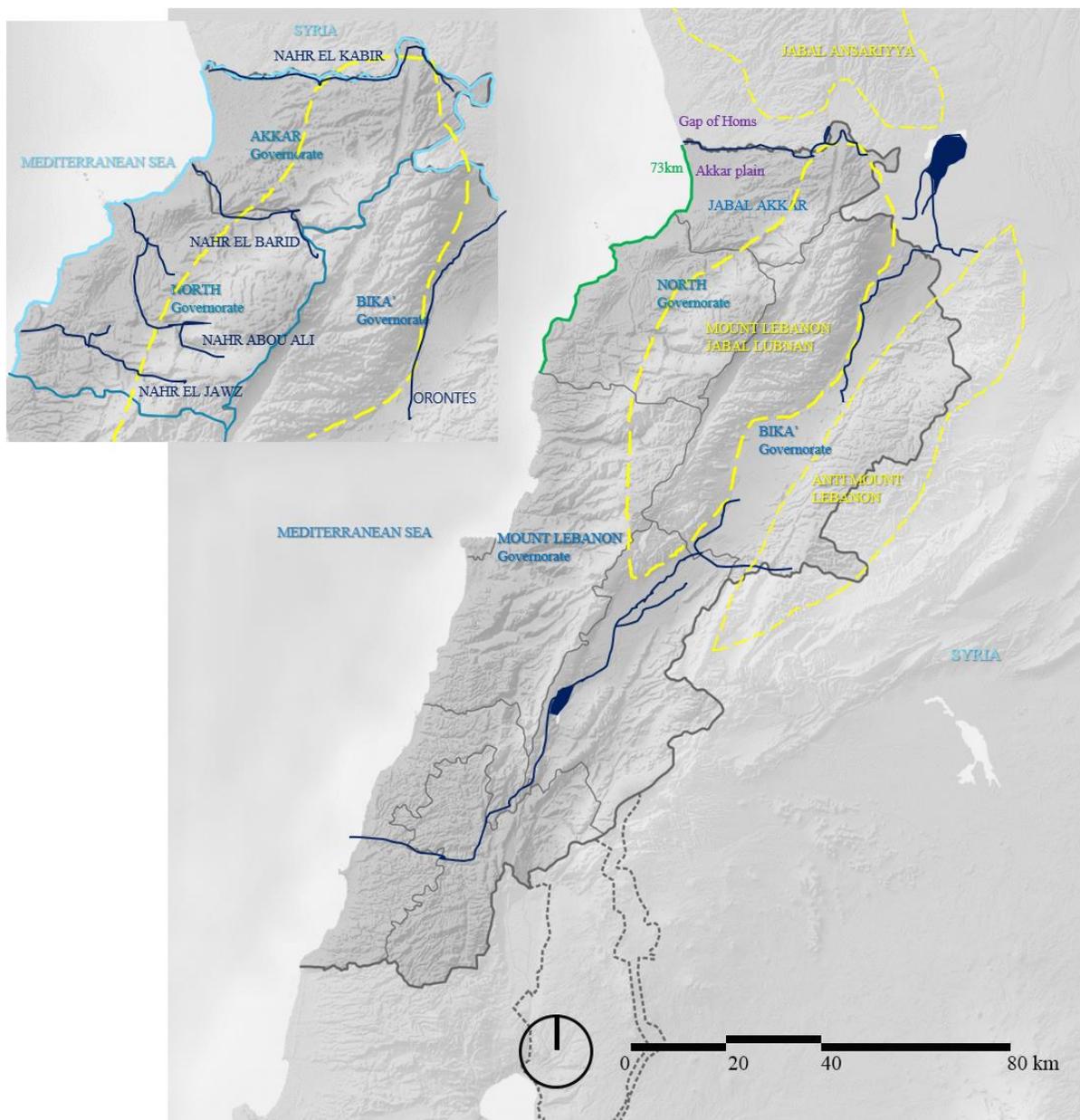
The Orontes River, which winds through the Syrian coastal region, can be observed meandering through the rift valley to the east of the Homs Gap.¹¹⁰ The source of this river can be traced back to the northern Biqā‘ valley, which serves as a natural boundary between Mount

¹⁰⁹ Volney C. F., 1788, pp. 309–310

¹¹⁰ For a detailed description see: Weulersse, 1940b, pp. 11–50

Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon to its east. From its origin in the mountains, the river flows through the territories of Syria and Turkey before finally discharging into the Mediterranean Sea near Antioch. In Arabic, the Orontes is known as the ‘Āṣī, which is a term that means “rebel”, highlighting the river's strong and independent nature. Unlike most rivers in the area, which flow in different directions, this river flows from south to north and then takes a sudden turn to the west before emptying into the Mediterranean.

The geographical complexity of the Lebanese coast played a significant role in shaping its history. It was also the fundamental factor in the development of the medieval settlement patterns. While the coast served as a commercial gate, the mountains served as a refuge for religious denominations. These denominations lived an isolated life focused on many fortresses, which abound in calcareous mountain ranges. The mountain fence contributed to the isolation of the coast from the rest of Syria, facilitating European settlement during the 12th and 13th centuries. Between the mountains, the plain showed a high level of agricultural wealth and production, and the coast contributed to the rich pattern of settlement due to its strategic location.



Map 2-Map showing the delimitation of the studied region.

4.2. Historical Framework.

4.2.1. Pre-Crusader Period.

The country, which is located at the crossroads of the Syrian hinterland and the Mediterranean Basin, has a rich history and is known for its diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural identities. According to the Cambridge Encyclopedia of Islam, the area under study is described:

*"... as a broken landscape of mountains, valleys, rivers, plains, and deserts, with ancient and distinctive cities, held a population of great diversity, imposed a fragmentation of government—a division into widely separated districts and regions..."*¹¹¹

4.2.1.1. Ancestral Antiques.

Given its fertility and favourable climatic conditions, the Lebanese coast attracted considerable human settlement the sites and architectural remains of which were widely used by the medieval inhabitants too. The Lebanese coastline held significant importance during the 3rd and early 2nd millennia BC, and foreign powers made it a major objective. There were significant settlements that were established and inhabited by many civilizations starting from the Middle (~1900-1600 BC) and the Late Bronze Age (~1600-1250 BC). Hence, the intensive urbanization that took place in the past has left numerous tells on the coastal plain, particularly in the region of Gap of Homs and 'Akkār, which medieval people found to be a popular choice when looking for secure bases to establish new settlements.¹¹² It is notable that an aspect of the settlement pattern in the coastal areas is the development of an extensive network of small ports, which has been a long-lasting component.¹¹³ Thus,

¹¹¹ Cambridge Encyclopedia of Islam, 1970, p. 175

¹¹² Maqdissi & Thalmann, 1989, pp. 100-101; Sapin, 1989, p. 110; Haykal, nd., pp. 107-134.

¹¹³ Hijāzī, 1992, p. 370

this period is considered as marking of the beginning of a pattern of settlement that endured through the Iron Age, lasting from 1200 to 590BC.

The Phoenicians, during the Iron Age, established trading colonies throughout the entire Mediterranean. As a result of this, the Levantine and Phoenician cultures were able to spread to other civilizations in the Mediterranean Sea, while also colonizing large areas in the West on their own. Established in the 8th century BC, Tripoli became later the capital of the Phoenician triple alliance of city-states, Sidon, Tyre, and Arvad (Aradus). In the early stage of the eighth century BC, the Phoenician cities entered into a vassalage relationship with the Neo-Assyrian Empire and continued to remain in a state of subjugation under the successive empires of Neo-Babylonia, Persia, and the Seleucid. It was during the seventh century BC that the origins of medieval Tripoli can be traced back to.¹¹⁴ The Lebanese coastlands witnessed various declines and movements in settlement patterns before the Roman period, although there was also an observable pattern of continuous and widespread development.

Throughout Phoenicia, the colonization of the hill slopes by terrace cultivation began during the Persian period, which lasted from 539 to 333 BC.¹¹⁵ During the Hellenistic period, new urban centres were established in Syria, bringing about a new wave of urbanization that lasted from 333 to 64 BC. Among these centres were Antioch (Anṭākiya), Seleucia (Samandagh), Laodicea (al-Lāziqiyya), and Apamea (Afāmiya).¹¹⁶

Throughout Roman suzerainty spanning from 64 BC to AD 636, the Syrian region remained generally stable, leading to a significant economic boom that lasted from the 2nd century AD onwards. Furthermore, the establishment of order was a necessary step after the chaos caused by the period of Seleucid rule, which had been characterized by disorder and dynastic struggles. After the declaration of Seleucid Syria and Lebanon as a Roman province and its addition to the Roman Empire, agriculture played a major role in catalysing its economic development, largely on the basis of the cultivation of grapes and olives. Even though the history and archaeology of the hinterland remain are mostly unknown,¹¹⁷ the

¹¹⁴ Ritter, 1854, p. 598

¹¹⁵ Sapin, 1989, pp. 108-109

¹¹⁶ Grainger, 1990, p. 48

¹¹⁷ Millar, 1993, p. 273

discovery of numerous pottery and glass sherds during the field surveys provides strong evidence for the existence of a complex network of rural settlements. The emergence of a new world religion took place in the 1st century in historical Syria, which subsequently became one of the Empire's prominent Christian centres. Despite the slow spread of Christianity, Lebanon, along with Syria and much of Anatolia, emerged as a significant hub of Christianity, particularly since paganism persisted in the mountainous regions. The Persian invasions, bubonic plague epidemics, and devastating earthquakes were some of the defining features of the last century of Roman rule in Syria and may be assumed to have affected the coastal region as well.

By the end of the 5th century AD, in the year 494, a significant seismic crisis occurred at the Syrian- Lebanese coastal region, resulting in the simultaneous destruction of both Tripoli and Latakia in Syria.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, the region experienced numerous earthquakes from 306 to 551. The seismic event that took place on 6 July 551, however, was the most catastrophic one of all. The fall of the cities of Phoenicia was attributed to this particular factor. The city of Beirut, fell victim and it appears that Tripoli suffered seriously too, reportedly being swallowed up by a tidal wave.¹¹⁹ Despite the devastating damage, it was necessary to rebuild the city, perhaps on a smaller landmass, and it required substantial fortification.

The Muslim armies reached the Lebanese coast. The resistance was able to last for a longer time thanks to the aid provided by the Byzantine fleet. The task of capturing the city proved to be a difficult challenge in 645, for the governor of Syria, Mu'āwiya of Damascus. As part of his strategy, he was tasked with executing a double siege, which required him to implement two critical tactics. The first involved erecting strongholds on the land, while the second involved enlisting the aid of the local Greeks to construct the first Arab naval fleet, all of which took place around 645. By creating the fleet, the aim was to prevent the Byzantines from exploiting the sea route, thereby making it easier to capture the city. As a result of these developments, Tripoli rose to become the second most significant war port

¹¹⁸ Plassad, 1968, pp. 10-20

¹¹⁹ Salamé-Sarkis, 1971-1972, pp. 99-101

for the Arab fleet, while Alexandria's disruption of Byzantine commercial activities had already begun by the end of the 7th century.¹²⁰

At that time, the establishment of a monastic tradition near the mountain range of Mount Lebanon emphasised the importance of asceticism and monotheism.

4.2.1.2. North Lebanon: religious denominations in the Middle Ages.

Northern Lebanon is home to a spectrum of religious denominations, Christians and Muslims, each with its own unique traditions, beliefs and practices.

Written sources and architectural evidence gathered through surveys and research in Lebanese territory indicate that the arrival and settlement of the Crusaders greatly strengthened many Eastern Christian communities. Christians were present in almost every part of the coastal region during the Crusader period, as evidenced by historical documents.

The Greek Orthodox.

Greek Orthodox was the dominant denomination before the Muslim conquest. It usually appears in Latin sources under the name of Syrian.¹²¹ Known as "Melchites", the Greek Orthodox were a community that remained faithful to the Council of Chalcedon in 451 and were a minority in northern Lebanon. During the 12th century they enjoyed the protection of the imperial capital, but the fall of Constantinople in 1204 isolated them and exposed them to the domination of the Syrian Orthodox in Lebanon. The language of the Greek Orthodox was nominally Greek, especially in Antioch, and Arabic in the countryside, but further from the main centres Syriac was used as the language of the liturgy.¹²² In Antioch, a group of elites emerged who wielded great political influence. They demonstrated their hostility to

¹²⁰ Abrweiler, 1966, pp. 17-18 and note 2 p.14

¹²¹ Pringle R. , 2003, p. 163; Weltecke, 2006, p. 110

¹²² Hamilton B. , 1980, pp. 159-187

the rival Armenians on several occasions, most notably during the War of Succession in the first half of the 13th century.¹²³

In Northern Lebanon, the centre of the Greek Orthodox was the Kūrā region, in the hinterland of Tripoli. Some neighbouring regions, like the Balamand zone to the south of Tripoli, where the most famous medieval Cistercian monastery stands, and where there is a strong presence too, is believed to have only fallen later into the hands of the Greek Orthodox.¹²⁴ Some other regions were certainly of Greek Orthodox denomination, based on the churches found and marked in the **Map 6** and in the **Table 1** which lists all the churches found in the region with their denomination, where it was recognisable.

The Syrian Orthodox.

The Jacobites were the opponents of the Council of Chalcedon 451, organised by the Bishop of Edessa. They were the dominant Christian church in Syria in the 7th century and allegedly welcomed the arrival of the Arabs, whom they welcomed as liberators from Byzantium.¹²⁵ Although the Crusaders did not directly contact the Syrian Orthodox Church in the hinterland of Syria, Frankish support gave hope and encouragement to Christians everywhere, especially those under Muslim rule. Those who did not move into Crusader territory also benefited from increased trade with Christians on the coast and the opening of the trade route to Europe. These contacts contributed to the revival of the Syrian Orthodox throughout the 12th and 13th centuries.¹²⁶ A so-called spiritual and intellectual revival that started in the 11th century.¹²⁷ It is known that the population of Tripoli consisted of different ethnic and religious groups, amongst which the Syrian Orthodox were considerable.¹²⁸

¹²³ Runciman, 1951, pp. 135-173

¹²⁴ Egmont, 1759, p. 290; Maundrell, 1963, pp. 35-36; Enlart C. , 1928, pp. 45-63

¹²⁵ El-Hayek, 1967 , p. 795; Fortescue, 1913, pp. 323-352

¹²⁶ Al-Duwayhī I. , 1951, p. 214

¹²⁷ Immerzeel M. , 2009

¹²⁸ Dodd E. , 2004, p. 16

The Maronites.

The Maronites constitute the dominant Christian community in the Lebanon today and their presence was also very considerable in the 12th – 13th centuries. Early Maronite history is poorly known, and contemporary interpretations often depend on myth and tradition. William of Tyre described the Maronites as poor, rough, mountain people who resided on Mount Lebanon's slopes.¹²⁹

Several queries have been raised. Who were the Maronites? Where did they come from? Were they only immigrants from northern Syria or were they from the country itself? Were they originally Phoenicians, Syrians, or Arabs?

To start with, the Maronite denomination is deemed an Eastern Catholic denomination. In 410, it is attributed to the death of Saint Mārūn, who lived his life in seclusion in northern Syria (close to Ḥārim or Qūrish).¹³⁰ Many Christians wanted to emulate his ascetic style. Following the death of Saint Mārūn in the fifth century, a monastery was erected between Homs and Qal'at al-Maqḍis (Apamea) named "Dayr al-Qidīs Mārūn."¹³¹ The monks living in the monastery were known as "Maronite Monks" and were known for their strong religion.¹³²

In the early days of Christianity, the Maronites and the Melkites held the belief that Christ had a singular will (one nature), but this changed when the Byzantines introduced the doctrine of the two wills (two natures: human and divine). While the Melkites accepted this new doctrine, the Maronites did not.¹³³

Relying on transhumance, which involves travelling from one place to another, a part of the Maronites ultimately settled in Mount Lebanon during the 7th century.

It is worth mentioning that the region had a long history of peace until the arrival of the first Arab conquerors in 635.¹³⁴ In the year 694, the army of Justinian II launched an invasion of

¹²⁹ William of Tyre, 1976, p. 458; Rey E. G., 1883, p. 78

¹³⁰ al-Hashim, 2001, pp. 271-289

¹³¹ al-Shihābī, Qutayba; Athanāsiyū, Mithrī Hājī, 2005, p. 8

¹³² *Ibid*

¹³³ Salibi K. , 1959, p. 288

¹³⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 35

Syria which resulted in the killing and burning of all the monasteries along with the men who were the disciples of Saint Marūn and their relatives, following which they were compelled to relocate to the southern region. Their choice of settlement was particularly noteworthy as they opted to live in the massive mountains of the Cedars, located in North Lebanon.

After leaving their homeland, some of them chose to settle in various towns and cities including 'Arqā, Tripoli, Zghartā, 'Ihdin, Amyūn, Qadīshā Valley, Qannūbīn, Bsharrī, Ḥaṣrūn, Batrūn, and Ḥadath al Jubbi.¹³⁵ Thus, the mountainous regions of North Lebanon, such as 'Ihdin,¹³⁶ Bsharrī,¹³⁷ Cedars,¹³⁸ Qannūbīn,¹³⁹ and al-Ḥadath,¹⁴⁰ were occupied by the Maronites during the Middle Ages. The western part of Mount Lebanon, was occupied by the Maronites, overlooking the coast: "*The side thereof next to the sea is inhabited by Christians*".¹⁴¹

Furthermore, the inhabitants of al-Munayṭira caused trouble in the mountains of North Lebanon in 759 when they rebelled against the communal land tax that was mandated for the villagers to pay to Ba'labak. The sources do not mention the area after the event which leads one to believe that the situation was peaceful again.¹⁴²

In 969, the Byzantine Empire made an effort to recapture the Orontes region from the Muslims. When this happened, the Maronites, who were living in the area at the time, chose to move deeper into Mount Lebanon as a means of protecting themselves.¹⁴³ According to historical accounts, when the Abbasids launched their first attack, the residents of the town fled to Bsharrī as a result of the brutal massacres that were occurring. The

¹³⁵ Hitti, 1985, pp. 304-307

¹³⁶ Magry, 1655, pp. 122-123

¹³⁷ Egmont 1759:281 Van de Velde, 1854, p. 480; Egmont, 1759, p. 281

¹³⁸ Magry, 1655, p. 133; Van de Velde, 1854, p. 474

¹³⁹ Maundrell, 1963, p. 192; Pococke, 1745, p. 93; Robinson G., 1837, pp. 94-95; Mariti, 1791, p. 71; Magry, 1655, p. 131

¹⁴⁰ Hitti, 1985, pp. 304-307

¹⁴¹ Aubrey, 1896, pp. 9-10

¹⁴² Cahen, 1978, pp. 1030-1034; Hitti, 1985, p. 327

¹⁴³ Salibi K., 1991, p. 22

conversion of the Christians living in the Mountains to Islam was the goal of the Abbasid invasion.¹⁴⁴

In 1099, the Maronites became allies of the Crusades. By the twelfth century, there was a growing connection between the Maronite and the Latin church,¹⁴⁵ particularly, when the Maronite Church was said to have agreed to unification with Rome in 1180.

During the second half of the 13th century, the mountain served as a strategic battleground for the Mamluks and the Crusaders. Historical records indicate that certain individuals known as "Christians of a Shām" assisted both factions.¹⁴⁶ Hence, it is evident that a split occurred among the Christian populace of Mount Lebanon during that specific era.

The Armenians.

The Armenians, another influential group of oriental Christians in the Crusader state, played a significant role. Christianity was introduced to Armenia in the 3rd century and greatly expanded by St Gregory the Illuminator in the 4th century. After the Council of Chalcedon in 451, they adopted Monophysitism, which believes in the unity of nature. St. Gregory and subsequent bishops were credited with establishing and explaining the core principles of the Armenian Church. During the Byzantine period and the Middle Ages, many Latin customs were incorporated.¹⁴⁷ When the Seljuk invasion took place in 1071 and Armenia was occupied, many Armenians fled to Cilicia (located in northern Syria, southern Eastern Turk) and later dispersed to Lebanon and Syria.¹⁴⁸ The Armenians and the Latin Crusaders formed a strong bond but managed to retain their distinct identity. They maintained their community, language, church and even survived foreign domination. Due to the Mamluk conquests oppression, many Armenians were forced to migrate to Christian Cyprus and later to the Tripoli region. The Armenians were minority in the studied region.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁴ Al-Duwayhī I. , 1951, p. 210

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*

¹⁴⁶ Salibi K. , 1992, p. 37

¹⁴⁷ Al-Duwayhī I. , 1951, p. 23

¹⁴⁸ al-Shihābī, Qutayba; Athanāsiyū, Mithrī Hājī, 2005, p. 6

¹⁴⁹ Rey E. G., 1883, pp. 75-104; Richard J. , 1945, p. 61; Hélou, 2019, pp. 1-15

The Ethiopians.

There is also some evidence to suggest the presence of Ethiopian Christians on the coast, especially in the Qadīshā valley since the 7th century.¹⁵⁰ There is a documented exodus of Ethiopian monks to Syria, particularly Mount Lebanon, a century before the arrival of the Crusaders.¹⁵¹ They left a wealth of archaeological remains in Lebanon.¹⁵² The first Ethiopian monks moved to the Qadīshā valley and settled in the monasteries of Mār Girgis and Mār Ya‘qūb, near ʾIhdin, the date is not yet certain.¹⁵³ Then they fled to Mar Girgis in Wādī Ḥadshīt.¹⁵⁴ This is attested by the encountered and reported cases where hermits once had lived, like for example Mār Āsia.¹⁵⁵ When the Ethiopian Christians became Non-Chalcedonian, they were influenced by the Latin presence in the Holy Land.¹⁵⁶

The Latins.

Data on the presence of European population, especially in the countryside, are minimal, although Latin sources constitute the bulk of documentation on the Syrian coastal region in the 12th and 13th centuries. For a long time, it was generally accepted that the majority of Latins were living in the urban centres of the Levant, especially in the coastal cities,¹⁵⁷ but this view has recently been called into question.¹⁵⁸ It is in the capitals of Antioch and Tripoli that most Europeans of the northern Levantine coast must have settled. Tithes were paid by the landlord of a given area, not by the peasants themselves, and Latin lords were often absent from their estates. But it is certain that Latins lived amongst all the coastal communities.¹⁵⁹ The presence of towers and courtyard houses could also be an indication of

¹⁵⁰ al-Qattar 2010, p.19-24; Baroudi 1998, p. 75-109, 115-141; Abi Aoun, Baroudi et Maroun 1998 ; abi aoun, Baroudi et Ghaouche 1993 ; Duwayhi 1951, p. 15, 206, 214, 216-219.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*

¹⁵² Dodd E. C., 2004, pp. 11-13

¹⁵³ Al-Duwayhī I. , 1951, p. 214

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid* p. 218; Salibi K. , 1991, pp. 148-150

¹⁵⁵ Dodd E. C., 2004, pp. 61-62, Abi Aoun, Baroudi & Maroun , Monasteries in Qadisha Valley occupied by Ethiopian monks after being forced out of Ehden, 1998, pp. 17-23.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid* p.12

¹⁵⁷ Praver, 1980, pp. 102-103

¹⁵⁸ Ellenblum, 1998; Pringle R. , 2003, pp. 174-178

¹⁵⁹ Major B. , 2015, p. 159

their rural presence. Among these places are the village of Qubba,¹⁶⁰ the tower of Bḥannān,¹⁶¹ "*villa, quae dicitur Bahani*" mentioned in a charter of 1127,¹⁶² and "*Ṭībū and its districts*" mentioned in the treaty of 1282,¹⁶³ etc.

Documents relating to Mamluk activity against Tripoli show that the smaller castles in the Gap of Homs were also occupied by a considerable number of civilians, many of whom may have lived in settlements close to the castle and only entered the fortifications in the event of an enemy attack. About 600 men and nearly 1,000 women and children were captured from the castles of 'Arqā, Ḥalbā and al-Qulay'āt in the 'Akkār plain during the 1267 raid.¹⁶⁴ As with these cases, general accounts of prisoners taken by Muslim raiding expeditions, such as the one against Latakia in 1136, where the number of prisoners, including women and children, was over 7,000,¹⁶⁵ suggest that Frankish civilians from the countryside may have been among them.

The Muslim denominations.

After a long siege, followed by the massacre of at least part of the Muslim population, the Crusaders took both Antioch and Tripoli. In general, the Muslim population was unmolested under Frankish rule, and there were several instances where the conquerors offered key positions to former Muslim overlords. There were instances where the Franks and the subjugated Muslims came close to co-existing in peace. The Arabic sources, even when well documented, do not usually identify the exact religious identity of the Muslims concerned. In this respect they are similar to Latin documents. Latin documents were extremely careless about the religious affinities of their Muslim subjects.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁰ Minervini, 2000, p. 150

¹⁶¹ Chaaya A., 2005-2006, pp. 231-243.

¹⁶² *RRH*, no. 118.

¹⁶³ Ibn 'Abdazzāhir, *Tashrīf* = *Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn 'Abdazzāhir, Tashrīf al-ayyām wa'l-uṣūr fī sīrat al-Malik al-Manṣūr*. ed. Murād Kāmil. A-83, 1961, pp.21-22.

¹⁶⁴ Abū Shāma, *Dzayl 'alā al-Rawḍatayn*, 240; Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rikh*, 109; transl. 85

¹⁶⁵ Ibn al-Qalānisi, *Dzayl*, 255; transl. 238-240.

¹⁶⁶ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, VIII/474; Ibn al-Qalānisi, *Dzayl*, 163; transl. 90; Ibn 'Abdazzāhir, *Tashrīf*, 86; Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rikh*, 182; transl. 144.

The Sunnī and Shī'ī Population.

With a few exceptions, it is only by looking closely at the circumstances in which they operate that the groups belonging to the two main Islamic denominations in the coastal region can be identified. Most members of mainstream Islam have been confined to the coastal strip, with the majority living in the cities, as the mountainous regions have traditionally been the refuge of sects and living conditions have generally been easier on the coastal plains. As a result, there has always been a strong base for Shī'ism in this region.¹⁶⁷ The Tanūkhid princes of the Shī'ī sect established their state centred on Latakia as early as H. 249 (863/64)¹⁶⁸ and, according to the 11th-century diary of Nāṣir-i-Khusraw, "*the people of Tripoli are all of the Shī'ah denomination*".¹⁶⁹ By the Mamluk period, when most Muslims in the Tripoli region were said to be Sunni, this seems to have changed considerably.¹⁷⁰ The majority of the population during the Mamluk period consisted of Muslims, residing in the mountains were located in Jabal 'Akkār and al-Dunniya. The northern region of Kisriwān was predominantly Shi'a. In the Biqā' and Ba'labak regions, the majority of the population adhered to the Sunnī Muslim faith.¹⁷¹

The 'Alawis.

Medieval sources make it clear that the huge mountain range flanking the coast was a world unto itself, not just geographically. This can be seen in numerous Arabic sources which specifically mention "mountain people". For religious communities persecuted in the more fertile and accessible regions, the coastal mountains provided an ideal refuge. In the 12th and 13th centuries, the 'Alawis and the 'Ismā'ilis were the two main Muslim groups in the mountains. Although the sources do not show the presence of the 'Ismā'ilis in the region

¹⁶⁷ According to Ya'qūbī (874) the inhabitants of 'Arqa were brought from Persia. Le Strange, 1890, pp. 397-398

¹⁶⁸ 'Uthmān, 1994, pp. 25-46

¹⁶⁹ Nāṣir-i-Khusraw, 1888, *Diary*, 8.

¹⁷⁰ Kattar, 1997-98, p. 71

¹⁷¹ Salibi K. , 1991, pp. 19-20

under study, but they existed in the neighbouring country Syria,¹⁷² they do mention the presence of the ʿAlawis. The Nuṣayrī doctrine is said to have begun in Iraq at the end of the 9th century and its followers, later known as ʿAlawis, were politically active as early as the first half of the 11th century.¹⁷³ An early mention of the Nuṣayrīs by name is related to military movements in 1129 in the Wādī al-Taym region of Baʿlabak.¹⁷⁴ Another possible mention of them comes from Burchard of Mount Sion in 1281, when he speaks of a wild and vicious race called "*Uannini*" living in the mountains between "*Arachas*" (ʿArqā) and "*Krack*" (Qalat al-Ḥuṣn).¹⁷⁵

4.2.1.2. The Early Muslim Era.

The Muslims initiated their conquest of the Levant in 634 and began by taking over the province of Syria, which was the initial territory to be freed from Byzantine authority. In the year 636, the Arab armies recaptured Damascus, subsequently conquering Baʿlabak, Ḥimṣ, and Ḥamā.¹⁷⁶ Syria's conquest was completed in 642.

Following the conquest, historical sources reveal ongoing uprisings and the continual danger posed by the Byzantine fleet.¹⁷⁷ At the borderland of Anatolia and Syria, the Byzantine government forcibly removed all inhabitants and devastated the rural area, establishing a barren region where any invading military force would be unable to procure sustenance. Immediately after the conquest the Muslims also used this strategy in fear of the Byzantines returning and establishing bridgeheads in the coastal settlements. As the Byzantine fleets were still capable of attacking the Syrian littoral, thereby severing its connection to the main sea lanes, it can be inferred that the economy of the settlements in the rural hinterland also experienced a downturn. During the time that Caliph Muʿawiya was in power, which spanned from 661-680,¹⁷⁸ a programme to refortify the coast was

¹⁷² Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, IX/47.

¹⁷³ Cahen, C., 1970, pp. 243-249

¹⁷⁴ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, IX/17.

¹⁷⁵ Richard J. , 1997, p. 148

¹⁷⁶ Lapidus M. I., 2014, p. 49

¹⁷⁷ Conrad, 1992, pp. 337-340

¹⁷⁸ Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, I/320.

established. This programme was also accompanied by the settling of Muslims, many of whom had Persian backgrounds, into the region.¹⁷⁹

Following the passing of nearly three centuries, during which the caliphal authority fragmented, the Byzantine military power underwent a renaissance under the Macedonian dynasty. The Christian borders were successfully extended to the south of Ṭartūs after the Byzantine reconquest in 969, which also saw the taking of Antioch. Following a Byzantine attempt to reclaim the Orontes from the Muslims, the Maronites who were living there relocated themselves to Mount Lebanon to ensure their safety.¹⁸⁰ During the time of the Byzantine reconquest wars in the end of the 10th and the first half of the 11th century, a series of castles were constructed in a region that had no fortifications before.¹⁸¹ Local Muslims are reported to have built numerous castles in less than ten years, including Ḥiṣn al-ʿUllayqa, Ḥiṣn al-Maynaqa, Ḥiṣn al-Balāṭunus (Qalʿat al-Mahālība), Ḥiṣn Banī Ghannāj and Ḥiṣn ibn al-Kāshih.¹⁸²

When the area under study was conquered by Arab Muslims, however, the Maronites were able to hold on to their religion. In order to comprehend the progress of events that took place in the Middle Ages, particularly in the mountain region, it is crucial to have a grasp of the outcomes of the initial Arab conquests in Northern Lebanon. While Lebanese historians provide detailed information about the events that occurred during the medieval period, medieval historians did not focus primarily on the North Lebanon region and therefore failed to provide a comprehensive account of the events that transpired there.¹⁸³

The rural hinterland, which covers vast areas of land, is often disregarded while most accounts concentrate on political events that happened in the urban areas. The purpose of using these sources is to fill in the gaps North Lebanon's history and provide a more complete understanding of the region.

¹⁷⁹ According to Yaʿqūbī (874) the inhabitants of ʿArqa were brought from Persia. Le Strange, 1890, pp. 397-398

¹⁸⁰ Salibi K. , 1991, p. 22

¹⁸¹ Major B. , 2015, p. 30

¹⁸² Yaḥyā ibn Ṣaʿīd al-Anṭākī, *Taʾrīkh*, 244, 257-259.

¹⁸³ Al-Duwayhī I. , *Tārikh al Tāʿifa al Mārūniya*, 1890

The Byzantine Empire experienced a decline in power due to the intense military activity that characterized the middle of the 11th century, coupled with the takeover of the Saljūqs during the second half of this century. Once the Saljūq rule began in the mid-1080s, the coastal lands had the potential to experience an ‘urban renaissance’.¹⁸⁴

The creation of new political entities was based on the strength of their fortifications. Furthermore, these entities were led by individuals whose power was determined by their tribal or family background. The survival of various groups in the region of Latakia was quite remarkable. For instance, the Tanūkhids were able to maintain their existence despite the numerous challenges they had to face. Additionally, Tripoli based on Banū ‘Ammār was able to survive and thrive,¹⁸⁵ even though they were rulers over the southern part of the Syrian coast. These examples demonstrate the remarkable resilience of the people in this area. Along with the fortifications that have been previously mentioned, other individuals were recognized as founders of fortifications in the region. These individuals include Naṣr ibn Musharraf al- Rawāfidī, Ibn al-Kāshih, and Muhriz ibn ‘Akkār, whose names have been recorded.¹⁸⁶ The latter was accredited with the building of Ḥiṣn ‘Akkār, named after him in this period.

While during the year 1050, the city of Tripoli was still in a difficult situation as it was engaged in a defensive battle against the Byzantine Empire in North Syria, and the 10th and 11th centuries were marked by frequent military movements, the chronicles of the First Crusade offer a different perspective on the region during the 12th century. These records suggest that the inhabitants of that area were able to create a prosperous and stable society, despite the challenges they faced.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ Hirschler, 2008, pp. 96-97

¹⁸⁵ Grousset R. , 1934, pp. 131-136

¹⁸⁶ Yaḥyā ibn Ṣa‘īd al-Anṭākī, *Ta’rīkh*, 244, 257-259; Ibn al-Qalānisī, *Dzayl*, 113; Ibn Shaddād, *Ta’rīkh Lubnān*, 113 ‘Uthmān 1994, pp. 35-71.

¹⁸⁷ Raymond of Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, XIV, 273-275; XVI, 277-278; *Gesta Francorum*, X, xxxiv, 182, 184; X, xxxv, 186.

4.2.2. The Crusader Period.

4.2.2.1. The arrival of the Latins.

"The county [of Tripoli] was not simply the product of European crusaders, but grew amid the verdant valleys of Lebanon, the forbidding heights of the Alawite mountains, and the fertile plains that lay between."¹⁸⁸

The demographic complexity of the county was unmatched by any other crusader state. From the moment that the Crusaders first crossed the boundaries of Syria, they began strategizing for the establishment of permanent centres in the newly conquered territories. Although the Crusaders failed to establish a permanent presence in the region, they left an imprint on Lebanon. Their conspicuous results are the remains of many churches along the coast, castle ruins on hills and mountain slopes, and many towers. The Frankish states of the Latin East had a complex and unstable population, which included various eastern Christian groups, already mentioned in the previous sub chapter under the North Lebanon denominations in the Middle Ages. The call to initiate the first Crusade was made by Pope Urban II in 1095. Three years later, on 3 June 1098, the Crusader army conquered Antioch, the former northern capital of Syria.¹⁸⁹ Raymond of St-Gilles, count of Toulouse, who was later to become the first count of Tripoli, led the armies that marched through the Gap of Homs.

The Banū 'Ammār of Tripoli allied themselves to the Franks out of fear of losing their city and supplied them with food.¹⁹⁰ Due to an agreement with the Crusaders, Tripoli was not attacked during the First Crusade. The Crusader conquest of the Syrian and Lebanese coastal region, which was undertaken from two directions, was a long process. The political fragmentation of Syria has been regarded as a crucial factor in the overwhelming success of

¹⁸⁸ Lewis, 2017, p. 1

¹⁸⁹ Ralph of Caen, *Gesta Tancredi*, LIX, 650.

¹⁹⁰ Salibi K. , 1992, pp. 85-86

the First Crusade. The Crusaders, during their campaign, besieged the city of Tall 'Arqā in 1099 and were finally able to conquer it nine years later in 1108.

On 21 April 1102, Ṭarṭūs was occupied under the leadership of Raymond of St-Gilles. In the same year Raymond transferred his attention to the conquest of Tripoli. The region of Tripoli was also considered an obstacle to the Christians since it separated the Franks of Antioch and Edessa from the Christians located in Jerusalem. Raymond aimed to establish a principality that could command both the coast road and Orontes. Despite the loss during the battle in 1101, Raymond was victorious in a battle outside Tripoli against Banū 'Ammār and the rulers of Homs and Damascus.¹⁹¹ However, Raymond's forces were too weak to conquer Tripoli itself. He returned to Ṭarṭūs to his headquarters to plan his next campaign. The Genoese squadron of forty vessels laying in Latakia was hired for an attack against Tripoli, but it failed so he moved to the south to conquer the port of Jubail.

Raymond of St-Gilles besieged Tripoli in 1103 by an oath sworn to Tancred to remain south of 'Arqā, (Medieval Latin name Archas).¹⁹² The count was following a territorial and political framework set,¹⁹³ where other towns were attacked in the vicinity such as Ṭarṭūs, Ḥiṣn al-'Akrād, and Homs.¹⁹⁴ A long-lasting siege of Tripoli¹⁹⁵ started with the order to build a new fortress, 'Qal'at Saint-Gilles'. It overlooked the city providing a base for attack and a residence. The fort was called the 'Pilgrims' Mount' by the Crusaders and their descendants.¹⁹⁶ The river, known as Nahr Abū 'Alī, derived its name from Fakhr al-Mulk Abū 'Alī ibn 'Ammār, the last ruler of Tripoli.¹⁹⁷ During the progress of the siege, the crusaders' camps located on the Pilgrim's Mount developed into a permanent suburb. Later, when the new crusader society was completed with a growing economy it developed into a sizeable town with abundant churches built.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹¹ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, ... (describes the battle).

¹⁹² RRH no. 581

¹⁹³ Lewis, 2017, p. 22

¹⁹⁴ Abu al-Fidā', *al-Mukhtasar fi ta'rikh al-bashar* [Recueil des Historiens des Croisades, Historiens Orientaux, volume 1], p. 6.

¹⁹⁵ Lewis, 2017, p. 22

¹⁹⁶ William of Tyr, vol. 1, pp. 485-6.

¹⁹⁷ Chaaya A. , 2007, p. 141

¹⁹⁸ Piana M. , 2010, pp. 307-354

On Raymond's death in 1105 the barons of Toulouse accepted his illegitimate son, Bertrand, as a successor. Bertrand had already governed for nearly ten years prior to his father's death during his absence in the East. Due to a lack of forces, the siege of Tripoli lasted until 12 July 1109.¹⁹⁹ It was finally led by Bertrand the new count, despite the limited resources, who were absorbed by the organization of the new state. With the limited resources of the new count, Bertrand, absorbed in the organisation of the new state, his rival Tancred, the regent of Antioch, was able to take the lead in the conquest of the Syrian coast between Frankish held Latakia and Ṭarṭūs. The next main target that Tancred was aiming for was not the direct hinterland of the northern coastline, but the region of the Gap of Homs. This decision was motivated by his desire to extend his authority as close as possible to his rival Tripoli, and by the fertility of the region. This campaign started with destructive attacks to undermine the economy and defensive ability in the area, thereby depriving the Muslim rulers of its revenues.

A treaty was drawn up in 1110 to put an end to their frightening attacks on Rafāniyya and Ḥamā. This treaty obliged the Muslims to give up the mountain fortresses of al-Munaytira and 'Akkār located in Mount Lebanon. The more important of these was 'Akkār, due to its important location overlooking the southern part of the Gap of Homs. In addition, Muslims were compelled to pay an annual tribute from Maşyāf, Ḥiṣn Ṭūbān, and Ḥiṣn al-Akrād and to share the products they got from the fertile plain of the Buqay'a.²⁰⁰ The majority of the sources mentioned indicate that the treaties initiated by the Franks were considered temporary, as Tancred had already captured Ḥiṣn al-'Akrād (Qal'at al-Ḥuṣn, Crusader Crac) in the same year, while continuing his attacks on the Muslim territories. Ḥiṣn al-Akrād was the key to getting into the Gap of Homs.²⁰¹

Bertrand, who was the count of Tripoli between 1109 and early 1112, was unable to be the ruler of an independent 'crusader state'. He died on 3 February 1112,²⁰² which was considered the end of the conflict between Antioch and Tripoli and led to the demarcation of the border between the two states. According to Albert of Aachen, Pons inherited Tripoli

¹⁹⁹ Ibn al-Qalānisi, *Dzayl*, 163; transl. 89

²⁰⁰ *Ibid* 165; transl. 93.

²⁰¹ *Ibid* 167; transl. 99.

²⁰² *Ibid* p. 181; Richard J. , 1945, p. 6 n. 2. Grousset R. , 1995, p. 889

‘from his parents’ upon his father's death.²⁰³ The southern region of Syria, Qal‘at al-Ḥuṣn, Ṣāfītā, Ṭarṭūs, and Marqiyya and lands north of Lebanon were given by Tancred to the young count Pons as a fief. Ibn al-Qalānisī and William of Tyre confirmed that Pons was a young man.²⁰⁴ Pons's reign began and ended with uncertainty and weakness. After his father's death, the county was a proto lordship split in two by the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

The only way to rescue Tripoli was to allow it to join the crystallizing kingdom of Jerusalem, as its northernmost city. Giving this region to Pons led to a relocation of the administrative boundary between the County of Tripoli and Antioch to be between Marqiyya and the Antiochene town Bānyās (Crusader Valenia). This remained unchanged until the ejection of the Crusaders.²⁰⁵ Jean Richard wrote that the county of Tripoli owed its very existence to the personal action of Raymond IV,²⁰⁶ noting that Pons carved the independent lordship for himself that was not intended to be a Crusader state. Nevertheless, it was clear that his reign had been pivotal in changing the very configuration of the Latin East.²⁰⁷

Since 1117, the rulers of Antioch had concentrated their efforts on securing the mountains overlooking the coast. In the absence of any notable acts by the minority in the early years of Pons's reign,²⁰⁸ The conquest of these territories demarcates a new phase in the Frankish development. Roger continued to appear in Tripolitan documents after Pons's succession, first in 1117 and then in 1127.²⁰⁹ Furthermore, he was the officer who accompanied Pons during the raids to the Biqā‘ valley between 16 May 1116 and 4 May 1117 (H. 510).²¹⁰ Capturing the important fortifications of the Anṣāriyya, marked a considerable importance in providing security in the coastal strip which was the link between Antioch and the southern Crusader states.

The lord of Tripoli, despite having mountains facing the coastline under his control, did not allocate much significance or time to expanding his power in that area. Rather, his

²⁰³ Albert of Aachen, 2007, p. 854

²⁰⁴ Ibn al-Qalānisī, *Dzayl*, p. 181; William of Tyr, vol.1, p. 522.

²⁰⁵ Probably in the valley of the Nahr al-Bāṣ. Deschamps P. , 1973, p. 7

²⁰⁶ Richard J. , 1945, p. 9

²⁰⁷ Lewis, 2017, p. 119

²⁰⁸ Ibn al-Qalānisī, *Dzayl*, p. 181.

²⁰⁹ Roger of Howden, 1868-71, p. 118

²¹⁰ Lewis, 2017, p. 77

focus was on securing a permanent foothold in the rich and fertile region of Rafaniyya. The latter is located on the eastern border of Anṣāriyya. The anticipation of a long struggle during the multiple hand change sets of Rafāniyya led to his finally taking the town in 1126.²¹¹ The whole coastal region fell under Latin domination with the acquisition of Rafāniyya. At this point the region dominated by the Franks in the Syrian coastal region reached its greatest extent. On the other hand, there was an area where castles remained under the control of the locals. To the south of the mountains lay the area which fell outside the Tripolitan circle of interest.

The settlements in the coastal region were greatly affected by the constant warfare that occurred during the first two decades. In the interior of Anṣāriyya and the northern region of 'Akkār, there were not any significant military movements.²¹² The most devastating earthquake was reported on 29 November 1114.²¹³ The chance for regeneration came after the conquest due to the peaceful decade of the 1120. Since that time, William of Tyr wrote that:

*"The enemies recognized the weakness of the leaders and kings, and they were making fun of those who were representing the foundation of Christianity in the region. Noting that they are not anxious about the Christian forces, and they were able to attack them without any hesitancy."*²¹⁴

4.2.2.2. Between 1130 and 1188.

During the 1130s, a new phase of the county started which is deemed a focal point of the development of the Muslim reconquest, according to Richard.²¹⁵ With the use of the political and military forces that affected the coastal region in Syria and the settlements, the progress and development were clear. Notably, this coincided with the significant political period and ideological change within Islamic Syria. 'Imād al-Dīn Zankī, the leader of the Muslim

²¹¹ William of Tyr, *Chronicon*, XIII, xix, 610-611; transl. II, 30.

²¹² Major B. , 2015, p. 32

²¹³ Fulcher of Chartres, 1969, pp. 1-5, 578-580 transl. 214; Ambraseys, 2009, pp. 283-291

²¹⁴ William of Tyr, *History of Deeds*, XVII, ix, 196-197.

²¹⁵ Richard J. , 1945, p. 24

reconquest, the Principality of Antioch, and to some extent Tripoli, were subject to a crisis that long lasted from 1130 to 1136.²¹⁶

This conflict contributed to the loss of territory in the eastern part of Antioch and the Frankish control of the mountain hinterland of the Syrian coast accompanied by serious internal fights.²¹⁷ According to William of Tyre, a few nobles fell, the bishop and the count were captured, and several non-high-ranking people were killed.²¹⁸ The Damascene army returned home to attack several Frankish forts on the way, including the Franks of Wādī ibn al-Aḥmar and another region al-Kūra.²¹⁹ At the end of 1137, Pons died.

This was also the period when the seditious Shi'ī sect, followers of the Niẓārī Ismā'īlīs, established themselves in Anṣāriyya, following their failure to find a home in the interior regions of Syria. The sect originally purchased several castles located in the region of al-Qadmūs from local Muslims in 1132/33.²²⁰ Others were obtained either by purchase or by force. According to Ibn al-Qalānisī and Ibn al-'Athīr, the establishment of the Niẓārī became disruptive, at least during the first decades of this formative period, because they were in constant war with their neighbours including the Christians.

The Muslims launched several attacks on the Syrian coastal area which had already survived acts similar to these. The armies of Aleppo guided to war in the region of Latakia, to devastate the region. Ibn al-Qalānisī, describes how, in the spring of 1130 the area devastated exceeded that of a hundred villages.²²¹ The Muslim ruler of Damascus, the *amīr* Bazwāj, bravely led his army on a deep penetration into the county in March or April of 1137, reaching as far as Pilgrims' Mount and up to the city of Tripoli. There he destroyed its army and killed the count near Tripoli as already mentioned. The *amīr* Bazwāj took a tower and a fortress called Ḥiṣn Wādī ibn al-Aḥmar and most probably other sites as well in the region of al-Kūra.²²² In July 1137, a few months after the soldiers of Damascus had shattered

²¹⁶ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, IX/18.

²¹⁷ Deschamps P. , 1973, pp. 260-261

²¹⁸ William of Tyr, vol.2, p.661

²¹⁹ Ibn al-Qalānisī, *Dzayl* pp.258,262

²²⁰ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, IX/47.

²²¹ Ibn al-Qalānisī, *Dzayl*, 255; transl. 238-240.

²²² *Ibid* 258, 262; transl. 244 being the two descriptions of the same raid. William of Tyr, *Chronicon*, XIV, xxiii, 661-662; transl. II/82.

the Tripolitan army and killed the count and attacked the county from the northeast William of Tyre says: ‘*the entire region was destitute of military forces.*’²²³ Zankī besieged Ba‘rīn and after defeating the Frankish relief forces, he focused on taking Rafāniyya by tricking the fortress into surrender.²²⁴ The Muslim strength was highlighted one year after by Zankī when he took and destroyed the Frankish fortified site closest to Tripoli, the important fortress of ‘Arqā.²²⁵

The accession of Count Raymond II marked an end to the bloodshed. The actions of the new count may be divided into two categories. The first included actions of questionable repute, such as the brutal massacre of Christians in Lebanon in 1137, while the second showed signs of weakness, such as the donation of large, strategically important areas of land to the military orders. Raymond has been making appearances in the same manner as his father did in the last few years, with a focus on addressing the decline in military confidence and motivation of the Islamic opposition. That's what led him to emerge in the institution of the military religious order, accompanied by big outsourcing of the county's defence to the Hospitallers and the Templars.²²⁶

As a result of the Muslim menace, the Count of Tripoli Raymond II decided to secure the area by giving large parts of it to the Order of St John in 1142.²²⁷ Both sides of the plain of ‘Akkār and the Gap along with the Crac (Qal‘at al-Ḥuṣn), Felitum or Felicium known today as Minjiz (Menjez) castle,²²⁸ the fertile Buqay‘a plain and the Jabal Ḥaluw behind it were included in the donation. The donation of the lands of Homs and Rafāniyya to the Hospitallers were intended to give a boost to the Order in their conquest. In return for the protection of the County of Tripoli, the Hospitallers got the right to have a quasi-independent region and they had full control of both religious and non-religious matters.²²⁹ The authority was also reflected in this region by getting the assurance and the guarantee that the count

²²³ *Ibid*, vol.2, pp. 661-2

²²⁴ Ibn al-Qalānisī, *Dzayl*, 259; transl. 242-243. William of Tyr, *Chronicon*, XIV, xxv-xxix, 663-670; transl. II/85-92.

²²⁵ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Ta‘rīkh al-bāhir*, 57.

²²⁶ Lewis, 2017, p. 172

²²⁷ *Cartulaire* I, no. 144.

²²⁸ Richard J. , pp. 187-192.

²²⁹ Riley-Smith J. , 1967, pp. 452-461; Riley-Smith J. , 2012, pp. 172-173, Hamilton B. , 1980, pp. 106-107, 148.

could not make any peace treaties with the Muslims without the permission and approval of the Order of St John.

The fortifications located in the county, which served as the northern flank of Latin Syria, were in the hands of the Muslims in late 1144. In 1148 with the loss of the second Crusade and the profit-making from the internal battle in Tripoli, Nūr al-Dīn captured and plundered the castle of 'Urayma near the coast between 'Arqā and Ṭartūs.²³⁰ According to Richard, the scandal during the second Crusade led to an irrevocable breakdown of relations between Tripoli and Occitania. This would explain why the successor of Raymond II and Raymond II, was forced to rely upon non-Occitan settlers like for example Pisan lord of Batrūn from 1180.²³¹ Nūr al-Dīn fought against the Antiochene army at 'Inab in the Jabal Summāq, on 30 June 1149, and killed the prince. After the battle, he conquered the citadel of Afāmiya and other sites on the way to Antioch.²³² Due to the loss of the places located to the east of the Anṣāriyya mountains, the Frankish territories of the coast were easily attacked by the Muslims.

The armies of Nūr al-Dīn attacked Ṭartūs in the spring of 1152.²³³ This destructive raid probably was in revenge for the large-scale Frankish raid of the Biqā' valley in December 1151. This latter had been repelled by the Muslim governor of Ba'labak after prisoners and livestock were taken by the Franks.²³⁴ Fortunately for the Latins, Nūr al-Dīn did not remain for a long period in Ṭartūs. Nevertheless, neither the local lord Raymond of Maraḳiyya nor Count Raymond of Tripoli had enough funds to restore the damage done to the city. That is why it was transferred first to the local bishop, who realized that he could not afford the cost. So, he transferred it to the Templars, who were already in control of the neighbouring castle Ṣāfītā (Crusader Chastel Blanc).²³⁵ During this period, the Muslims took several castles, which are unnamed in the sources. Raymond II was killed in 1152. After his death, Latin Christians in Tripoli rampaged through the city, killing easterners in revenge

²³⁰ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, IX/160-161; Ibn al-Qalānisī, *Dzayl*, 300-301; transl. 287-288.

²³¹ Richard J. , 1945, p. 91

²³² Ibn al-Qalānisī, *Dzayl*, 305-306; transl. 291-294.

²³³ *Ibid* 318; transl. 312.

²³⁴ *Ibid* p. 317-8

²³⁵ Riley-Smith J. , 1969, pp. 279-280,282-283; Kennedy, 1994, p. 138; Richard J. , 1945, pp. 21-22,67

for the count's killing. This outbreak of violence is known as the Pogrom.²³⁶ It was Baldwin III, the cousin of Raymond II, who was able to calm the Latin Christians and bring order back to Tripoli.

Although the Templars were unable to enter the county quickly like the Hospitallers, they managed to expand their territory rapidly along the Syrian coast. The Hospitallers were in a very commanding position in the area of the Crac in the north-eastern part of the Anṣāriyya and the region of the Upper Orontes Valley. By the middle of the 1150s the Templars started to catch up by firmly holding Tartus and Safita with some lesser donations. One year later, Nūr al-Dīn and his brother Quṭb al-Dīn, the lord of Mosul, raided the county one more time via the Gap of Homs. In that time 'Arqā was besieged and the Templar fortresses of Ḥalbā, 'Urayma, and Ṣāfītā were destroyed before the Muslim forces returned to Homs for the Ramaḍān fast (in June -20 July 1167).²³⁷ Abū Shāma mentioned that if 'Arqā had been besieged or conquered then Tripoli would also have been conquered.²³⁸ According to Richard's assessment, the fortress of 'Arqā was also known as 'the key to Tripoli'. In December 1169 or January 1170, a military force presumably from the county managed to recapture Gibelacar, an important castle in the defence system of the county overlooking the plain of 'Akkār. In 1171 the Muslims invaded the same region, again, capturing the *rabaḍ* of 'Arqā together with the environs of Tripoli, 'Urayma and Ṣāfītā. At the same time, Nūr al-Dīn caused some destruction in the region around Antioch.²³⁹ Saladin (Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn), who had effectively been ruling Egypt semi-autonomously since 1169, conducted the next expedition in 1180, while the count, the Hospitallers, and the Templars remained sealed in their fortresses. Simultaneously, Saladin's fleet arrived at the island of 'Arwād and caused some damage to the suburb of Ṭarṭūs,²⁴⁰ although without choosing to attempt a permanent occupation. He invaded the county in the first place to neutralize Tripoli as he had already neutralized Jerusalem through the same treaty months before.²⁴¹ Even though the raids besieged the settlements along the southern part of the Syrian coastal region, the effects should have been sensed in an area covering a wider area. Salībī mentioned that

²³⁶ William of Tyr, *Chronicon*, XXII, xix, 787; transl. II/214.

²³⁷ Ibn al-Athīr, vol. 11, p. 327.

²³⁸ *Idzā mulikat 'Arqā, mulikat Ṭarābulus*. Abū Shāma, *Kitāb al-rawḍatayn*, vol. IV, p. 8.

²³⁹ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Ta'rikh al-bāhir*, 154.

²⁴⁰ William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, XXII, ii-iii, 1008-1009; transl. II/447- 449.

²⁴¹ Hamilton B., 2000, p. 159

Nūr al-Dīn's successor, Saladin (1174-1194), raided Tripoli after the battle of Tibnīn in 1179.²⁴²

During the following years, the Maronite Church started union with the Roman Church. Despite the ongoing conflicts between Christians and Muslims during that time, the Frankish Christian authorities still allowed Muslim traders and merchants to cross their lands, with the requirement to pay specific taxes. The Franks had never experienced a similar political situation.²⁴³ While Raymond III. entered office, Saladin seized Damascus, Baʿlabak, Shayzar, and Hama from those claiming to represent Nūr al-Dīn's son, al-Ṣāliḥ ʾIsmāʿīl al-Malik. Raymond led his combined army from Jerusalem and Tripoli against Saladin. The army came from Jerusalem to Lebanon to ʿArqā, where they camped in Tall Khalīfa (terra Galifa) at the beginning of January 1175.²⁴⁴

A few months before the battle of Ḥaṭṭīn, Bertrand of Mazoir gave away the family seat at al-Marqab and all its dependencies to the Hospitallers.²⁴⁵ Raymond's life before and after his captivity was defined by personal failure and a lack of judgment both in court and in battle.

4.2.2.3. 1188 Saladin's Campaign.

In July 1187, when twenty thousand Crusaders were on their way going to relieve the city of Tiberias, they met Saladin's army, and they were annihilated at the village of Ḥaṭṭīn. Saladin launched a main military operation against the Crusader states of Tripoli and Antioch in 1188. This was done after his victory against the Crusader armies at Ḥaṭṭīn on the 4th of July 1187 and after having taken most of the Frankish fortresses and settlements in the Kingdom of Jerusalem,²⁴⁶ where he was able to occupy the coast, except Tyre. With the exception of the capitals of Tripoli and Antioch and the main castles of the Military Orders

²⁴² Salibi K. , 1991, p. 150

²⁴³ Hamilton B. , 2000, pp. 93-94

²⁴⁴ William of Tyre, vol.2, p. 971.

²⁴⁵ *Cartulaire* I, no. 809; Mayer, 1993, p. 176

²⁴⁶ Detailed accounts: Bahāʾ al-Dīn, *al-Nawādir*, 86-94; transl. 81-88; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, X/48-59; Abū Shāma, *al-Rawḍatayn*, II/126-134.

every Crusader fortification in the Anṣāriyya and the southern Jabal al-Aqra' were taken.²⁴⁷ The first peace treaty at the end of September gave Saladin the chance to be an effective ruler of the agricultural hinterland of Antioch.

The campaign of Saladin was not expected by the Franks on the Syrian coast and had many consequences on the lifestyle in this region. In addition to the loss of Jerusalem which was a big setback to the Christians of Europe. Here came the call for the Third Crusade, which was declared by the principal crowned heads of Europe at the time. Armies from the three strong monarchies of Germany, England, and France focused on retaking the central port-city of Acre. As the German Crusade advanced, there was famine and devastation, especially in the region of Ṭartūs and Antioch.²⁴⁸ As a result of many other burned regions like Bānyās for example, and due to the huge number of lost territories, there was a serious lack of food. This was particularly the case in Antioch, as it had lost not only communication with Syrian coastal zone and its neighbourhood but also with the closest surroundings of the city. It also faced a huge invasion of refugees whom Tripoli would not accept and had driven off,²⁴⁹ as well as the arrival of the German Crusade.²⁵⁰ Saladin was worried about letting the Germans take the coastal cities and establishing bases there. The situation was so critical²⁵¹ that it forced Bohemond III, the prince of Antioch, to visit Saladin in person in October 1192.

4.2.2.4. The era of the Military Orders 1188 to 1260.

The Crusader states who endured the previous catastrophe even though they had a very reduced quantity of territory, quarantined themselves to the coastal strip of Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine. The area of the Gap of Homs was from the former inner territories that remained under Frankish control. That might have been the reason why the Crusader states moved their administrative centre from Antioch to Tripoli²⁵² after the unification of the ruling dynasties. It may be noted that this region was in the hands of the Hospitallers. In the

²⁴⁷ Major B. , 2015, p. 34

²⁴⁸ *Ibid*

²⁴⁹ *The Conquest of Jerusalem*, 65.

²⁵⁰ *The Chronicle of the Third Crusade*, 67; Bahā' al-Dīn, *al-Nawādir*, 139-140; transl. 135.

²⁵¹ Bahā' al-Dīn, *al-Nawādir*, 146; transl. 135.

²⁵² Hamilton B. , 1980, p. 286

post-Hattin period, most of the lands that were left in Frankish control on the Syrian coast belonged either to the Hospitallers or to the Templars in the 13th century. The military orders took nearly all defensive responsibility from the lay aristocracy. With the exception of the capitals of Antioch and Tripoli, the Military Orders took control of almost all defensive functions from the nobility. Using the resources of their extensive European territories, they embarked on a major fortification initiative.²⁵³

Following the conclusion of the third Crusade in 1190, a treaty was signed in 1192 between Saladin and the Crusaders. This ultimately affected the conquered Syrian coastal areas as part of the redistribution of the Ayyubid territories. A consensus was reached between them indicating that the Franks had taken over the coastal regions, whereas the mountainous areas of North Lebanon remained in the hands of the Muslim rulers.²⁵⁴ However, the arrangement that was in place came to an end in 1193 following the death of Saladin.²⁵⁵ The Crusaders were able to reclaim Jubayl in the early days of 1197. The Hospitaller Order's external policy was very aggressive because they exploited the struggles of the Ayyubid family, who controlled the Muslim territories adjacent to them.²⁵⁶ Through these military actions, the main objective was to intimidate the Muslim neighbours and extract tribute from them, which was seen as a priority.

The Crusader raids under Hospitaller leadership on the territories bordering the County of Tripoli on the East were reported in 1203,²⁵⁷ 1204/5,²⁵⁸ 1208,²⁵⁹ 1214,²⁶⁰ 1220,²⁶¹

²⁵³ Major B. , 2015, p. 36

²⁵⁴ Abu'l Fidā' 1931, pp. 67-9; Ibn al Athīr 1965, p. 217.

²⁵⁵ Hitti 1985, p. 370; Glubb 1973, p. 43

²⁵⁶ Riley-Smith J. , 2012, pp. 91-92

²⁵⁷ Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij al-kurūb*, III/143, 148-150; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* I/273. Two campaigns took place within three weeks.

²⁵⁸ The first campaign was directed against Hama (Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij al-kurūb*, III/162-164.), while the second targeted Homs. Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij al-kurūb*, III/164. Also, in the summer of 1205 there was a combined Crusader attack on Jabala and Latākiā. Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij al-kurūb*, III/166-167.

²⁵⁹ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, X/262-263.

²⁶⁰ Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij al-kurūb*, III/223; Ibn al-ʿAdīm, *Zubda*, III/166-167; *Cartulaire* II, no. 1432. The master of the Hospital took part in the siege of al-Khawābī castle of the *Ismāʿilis*.

²⁶¹ Temporary retaking of Jabala. Riley-Smith 1967, p. 445.

1229,²⁶² 1230,²⁶³ 1231,²⁶⁴ 1233,²⁶⁵ 1234,²⁶⁶ and 1236.²⁶⁷ This policy had a dual effect. On one hand, it forced a large portion of the Muslim neighbours, including the 'Ismā'īlis, Hama, Homs, and Aleppo to become a temporary tributary of the Franks. On the other hand, it also facilitated the exaction of revenge.²⁶⁸ The region of the Gap of Homs witnessed three major Ayyubid military activities during the first half of the 13th century. In the year 1207, two separate military operations took place: the siege of Qal'at al-Ḥuṣn and the siege of Tripoli.²⁶⁹ After the Muslim armies led by Malik al-Ādil attacked, they were able to capture and subsequently destroy the Hospitaller castle of al-Qulay'āt.²⁷⁰ The second was in 1218 when the suburbs of neighbouring Qal'at al-Ḥuṣn and Ṣāfītā were destroyed and several lesser fortresses were taken.²⁷¹ The third one was in 1231 when a general raid was conducted against the coastal region.²⁷² Due to the serious earthquakes in 1196,²⁷³ 1202,²⁷⁴ and 1287,²⁷⁵ and due to the war in Antioch that lasted from 1198 to 1221, the lands around the city were raided several times. For example, the earthquake in 1202²⁷⁶, which had a significant impact on the Crusader states, damaging critical infrastructure, weakening military defences and causing considerable loss. These factors contributed to a challenging environment for the Crusaders, who were already engaged in complex political and military struggles in the region.

“In this year also a great earthquake occurred in Syria. The earth shook with it, and the people were anxious, but as the tremors ceased,

²⁶² Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, X/439; Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij al-kurūb*, IV/279.

²⁶³ Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij al-kurūb*, IV/303-305.

²⁶⁴ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil* X/452; Riley-Smith 1967: 137-138 ; Riley-Smith 2012 : 91.

²⁶⁵ Major B. , 2015, p. 36(*Annales de Terre Sainte*, 439)

²⁶⁶ Listed by Cahen, C., 1940, p. 650

²⁶⁷ Major B. , 2015, p. 36(Philip of Novara, *Les gestes de chiprois*, 117; transl. 194.)

²⁶⁸ Major B. , 2001a, pp. 63-67

²⁶⁹ Delaville Le Roulx, *Cart Hosp* 2:505, no. 2148 (RRH no. 1073a)

²⁷⁰ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, X/263; Ibn Wāṣil, *Mufarrij al-kurūb*, III/173.

²⁷¹ *Ibid* III/265; Deschamps P. , 1973, p. 251

²⁷² *Mufarrij al-kurūb*, IV/311.

²⁷³ Letter of the grand master to the king of Navarre on the earthquake followed by pestilence destroying the crops. Riley-Smith J. , 1967, pp. 192, 439-440

²⁷⁴ Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil* X/181; Abū Shāma, *Dzayl 'alā al-rawdatayn*, 20; Mayer, 1972, pp. 300-310; Ambraseys, 2009, pp. 327- 337.

²⁷⁵ Ibn 'Abdazzāhir, *Tashrif*, 151; Ambraseys, 2009, pp. 351-352.

²⁷⁶ Abū Shāma, *Dzayl 'alā al-rawdatayn*, 20; Mayer, 1972, pp. 300-310; Ambraseys, 2009, pp. 327- 337.

their souls were restored from palpitation and distress to tranquillity and their hearts were comforted after disquiet and fear. ²⁷⁷

The most affected locations of the studied region were the Mount Lebanon, 'Akkār region, Tripoli, from the studied region,²⁷⁸ most likely affected sites like Menjez.²⁷⁹ It was clear that while improving the land arguments between the Hospital and the Temple,²⁸⁰ the Frankish territories on the coast, especially in the Gap of Homs, enjoyed a relatively safe period under the Military Orders' shadow in the first half of the 13th century. In 1260, the Ayyubid rulers of Syria were swept aside by the Mongols, whose invading army was itself destroyed at 'Ayn Jālūt in northern Palestine by the forces of the Egyptian Mamluk sultan al-Zāhir Rukn al-Dīn Baybars.²⁸¹

4.2.2.5. The Reconquest of the Mamluks (1260-1291).

The Mongol invasions and the Mamluk reconquest were the main events in the region during the second half of the 13th century. The inhabitants of the coastal region were affected by the Mongol invasions of Syria in 1259, 1261, and 1280, 1281. Northern Syria was destroyed and because of this destruction, the metropolis and the economic centre of Aleppo was erased. A uniquely large number of refugees appears,²⁸² most of them making for territories held by Muslims.²⁸³ A negative effect was caused by the opening of new Asian trade routes which had their western terminals north of the troubled territories of Syria- Palestine. This resulted in severe economic damage to the Crusader states, who were reliant on the income gained from the trade passing through their ports to cover the cost of confronting the Mamluk attacks.²⁸⁴ At that time Antioch and Tripoli were spared Mongol damage, as they were ruled

²⁷⁷ Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dzayl, p. 149

²⁷⁸ Ambraseys, 2009, pp. 380-381.

²⁷⁹ Devastations were reported in 1202, 1203, 1207, 1208, 1209 and 1212. Riley-Smith J. , 1967, pp. 152-160. (There were certainly not that many earthquakes, but historical sources usually mix things up.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid* pp. 439, 444-447, 449.

²⁸¹ Riley-Smith J. , 1991, p. 108; Mansfield, 1976, pp. 67-69; Salibi K. , 1991, p. 15

²⁸² Ashtor, E., 1976, p. 290

²⁸³ Ashtor, E., 1992, p. 254

²⁸⁴ Riley-Smith J. , 1973, p. 29

by Bohemond VI, who joined the Mongol camp at the request of his pro-Mongol father-in-law the king of Cilicia.

In 1261, Baybars declared a reconquest strategy on the Levantine coast, just after the repelling of the first Mongol invasion led against the Crusader state of Antioch and Tripoli. The Franks were obliged by the Mamluks to negotiate treaties that required them to renounce territories in order to retain some of the lands left in their power for a fixed period of time. Due to internal conflicts, the defensive capacity of Latin coastal Syria was reduced. For example, the war of St. Sabas in 1256-1261²⁸⁵ and the intermittent civil wars in Tripoli, which were between 1277 and 1282,²⁸⁶ endured from several points of view of the studied region. Food was also scarce during this era. This was due to the weather, loss of agricultural land and the Hospitallers were in a very critical financial position.²⁸⁷

The estimated effects of these civil wars were equally considerable. The Crusades, in addition to religious motivations, also resulted in political instability, territorial changes, and shifting alliances among the Crusader states. With internal conflicts weakening the overall Crusader presence in the region, it became challenging for them to mount coordinated military campaigns against the external opponents. The research area has been indirectly influenced by the conflicts and divisions among the Crusaders, and the fragmented nature of the Crusader states made them more susceptible to external threats.²⁸⁸

Having expelled the Mongols, Baybars,²⁸⁹ concentrated on a strategy that could help him to invade the territories of Antioch and destroy his city port in the summer of 1262.²⁹⁰ As revenge for the unsuccessful Crusader attack against Homs,²⁹¹ he invaded Tripoli in the next summer 1266. This was the first Mamluk invasion.²⁹² Under the reign of Raymond IV, in 1264, the Christians of the Mount Lebanon, the northern region of Lebanon, came down to secure the city of the Franks, Tripoli and they defeated the Mamluks. After that, Baybars

²⁸⁵ Riley-Smith J. , 1969, p. 183

²⁸⁶ Runciman III, 388-389; *The Templar of Tyr*, 70-73, 75, 78-79.

²⁸⁷ Riley-Smith J. , 1967, p. 443

²⁸⁸ Runciman, 1951, pp. 56-70

²⁸⁹ Popper 1957, pp. 7-8, 11-12

²⁹⁰ Major B. , 2015, p. 38; Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rikh*, 60; transl. 50.

²⁹¹ Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rikh*, 107; transl. 83-84

²⁹² *Ibid* 109; transl. 85-86.

was still persevering, and in 1266 he attempted another fight, during which 24 villages were destroyed.²⁹³ The Mamluks attacked the region including the plain of 'Arqā near Tripoli.

In 1266, they captured and destroy the nearby castles of 'Arqā, Ḥalbā and al-Qulay'āt and Menjez or *Felicium*. They captured a staggering number of people, over 660 men and 1,000 women and children, and proceeded to occupy 16 towers in the surrounding area.²⁹⁴ Tībū tower, Mlāshīn tower, and Bḥannīn tower were likely taken at this time. Due to the lack of protection in the agricultural hinterland of Tripoli, both Military Orders, were compelled to take legal action to ensure peace. The year 1268 marked the beginning of an important invasion led by Baybars, which was directed towards the environs of Tripoli.²⁹⁵ In the course of the second Mamluk invasion, he caused damage to the aqueduct of the capital and some lesser sanctuaries while also demolishing the Hospitaller castle of Tall Khalīfa.²⁹⁶

In 1270, the third Mamluk campaign against the area of neighbouring Crac des Chevaliers occurred.²⁹⁷ The Mamluk sultan paid attention to the area that still belonged to the Franks, namely the Gap of Homs. In 1271, the fourth campaign of the Mamluks took all the known Crusader fortifications in the region including 'Akkār, Crac des Chevaliers, and Ṣāfītā.²⁹⁸ Given its location, it is thought that the latter should have been taken away from the Crusaders. Because of this unique condition, the Latin parties had no alternative except to ask for peace once again. The Hospitallers were compelled to relinquish all earnings from the Mongol invasion and renounce any revenue they were receiving from Muslim settlements.²⁹⁹ The prince, he was obliged to report all of the revenue he had received. With regard to the Templars, it should be noted that they renewed their treaties with Baybars too.³⁰⁰ During the reign of al-Manṣūr Qalawūn (1279-1290), there was a renewal of military activity in the form of the Mongol invasion on the coastal lands in 1280. The Mamluks

²⁹³ Sālih Ibn Yaḥyā. ed. Salibi, K.& Hours, F., 1927, p. 22

²⁹⁴ Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'riḥ*, 109; transl. 85-86.; Abū Shāma, *Dzayl*, 239-240.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid* 143; transl. 116.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid* 143; transl. 116.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid* 176; transl. 139.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid* 180-182; transl. 143-144.

²⁹⁹ Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, XIV/42-51; Major B. , 2015, p. 38; Holt, 1995, pp. 48-57

³⁰⁰ Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'riḥ*, 190; transl. 150; Ibn Shaddād, *Ta'riḥ Lubnān*, 112.

changed their attitude, signing a pact with the Franks in 1281 following Baybars.³⁰¹ Until that time the Mamluks were unable to get Tripoli.³⁰²

In the second half of the 13th century, Tripoli was embroiled in a civil war marked by a series of conflicts between Bohemond VII and his vassal, Guy II Embriaco of Jubayl. In 1277, a marriage dispute between Guy and Bohemond escalated into a feud after Guy kidnapped and married a local heiress and fled to the Templars for protection. Bohemond responded by destroying Templar properties in Tripoli. The Templars retaliated by burning the castle of Batrūn, but their attempt to storm Anfah failed, resulting in the capture of several knights. In 1278, after a fierce battle near Batrūn where Bohemond suffered a heavy defeat, a truce was established. However, conflict resumed, and Guy, backed by the Templars, attacked Bohemond again. Despite his defeat, Bohemond managed to scatter twelve Templar galleys that attempted to enter Tripoli's harbor. Bohemond then launched a counter-attack on the Templar castle of Sidon, causing damage before another truce was arranged by the Grand Master of the Hospital, Nicholas Lorgne. The conflict culminated in January 1282 when Guy attempted to capture Tripoli itself. This plan failed, leading to the capture of Guy and his allies, who were taken to 'Anfah and executed by being buried up to their necks and left to starve.³⁰³ This took place during the final days of February 1282.³⁰⁴ Meanwhile, in 1282, the Maronite schism had intensified and Father Yusuf Dāghir wrote:

"The Mamluks could not take Ṭarābulus except after they had defeated their Maronite allies". ³⁰⁵

The reason for this attack could be linked to the Crusaders, who were responsible for harming the Muslim traders in 'Akkār.³⁰⁶ Following the capture of the county of Tripoli by

³⁰¹ Ibn al-Furāt 1942, p. 206; Ibn 'Abd az Zāher 1961, p. 210; Abul Fidā' 1931, pp. 23-24; Al Nuwayrī 1990, p.329.

³⁰² Al-Nuwayrī 1990, pp. 46-49; Al-Qalqashandī 1964, p.233

³⁰³ Runciman, 1951, pp. 388-389

³⁰⁴ Deschamps P. , 1973, pp. 297-301

³⁰⁵ Dāghir, 1958, p. 34

³⁰⁶ Sālih Ibn Yaḥyā. ed. Salibi, K.& Hours, F., 1927, p. 22

Qalawūn in the year 1289, the city was destroyed and subsequently rebuilt under the orders of the sultan. The new city was constructed at the base of the Castle of Sait Gilles, and it is now known as Old Tripoli.³⁰⁷ Many believe that the castle of 'Anfah was destroyed by the Mamluks during the disaster, leading to its ultimate demise.

4.2.2.6. The Effects of the Expulsion of the Crusaders.

Starting from the Arab conquests and spanning throughout the entire Medieval period, the historical records of North Lebanon bear witness to numerous invasions and assaults on the Northern Mountain region. It is notable that the Crusaders, who were initially thought to be waging a religious war, surprisingly turned out to be fighting a political and economic war as well.³⁰⁸ The Franks took advantage of the situation when the inhabitants were against the Banū 'Ammār and used it to take over Northern Lebanon. Following a lengthy period of 185 years of occupation in Tripoli, the Crusaders suffered a major defeat against Qalawūn in 1289.³⁰⁹ The Christians, during this period, experienced a sense of isolation thus they felt obliged to work together with the Mamluks.³¹⁰

The failure of the previous settlement pattern in Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine was a direct result of the massive destruction that occurred during the Mamluk reconquest.³¹¹ Even though specific fortifications were taken over by the Mamluks, most of the centres met the same future as the rural hinterland during the raids. Qal'at al-Ḥuṣn was kept by the Mamluks as the main inland castle and on the coast. Several urban centers were completely destroyed, including the cities of Antioch, Tripoli, the town of Ṭartūs, ³¹²the towers of Marqīyya and the one that was located in the port of Latakia.

The power of the Mamluks depended on their military system. While initially known as a “garrison town,” Tripoli's role evolved as it became a vital centre for pacifying Lebanon

³⁰⁷ Abu'l-Fiḍā', *Mukhtaṣar*, II/357-358; transl. 14-15; Ibn al-Furāt, *Ta'rikh*, VIII/80.

³⁰⁸ Michaud, 1862, pp. 418-424

³⁰⁹ Riley-Smith J. , 1991, pp. 36-37

³¹⁰ Salibi K. , 1991, p. 17

³¹¹ Pringle D. , 1986a, pp. 22-23; Fuess A. , 1997-98, pp. 85-101

³¹² Abu'l-Fiḍā', *Taqwīm al-buldān*, 229.

and putting an end to heretical sects. During the 13th century, the villages of Mount Lebanon: Zghartā, Ḥadshīt, Bsharrī, Blaūzā, Qannūbīn, Ḥaṣrūn, and al Ḥadath witnessed conflicts between Muslims and Christians, while coastal towns faced frequent invasions by the Franks. Their location in the Qādīshā valley provided a good hideout to many people who fled from the attacks, the battles, and the invasions on the coast. In that specific topography, the villages were standing one for the other and helped each other in case of any attack leading to a fast refuge to the other closest village.

The coast had seen serious modifications, once the conquest was completed, the Mamluks finalized their organizations, and they could reshape all the settlement patterns. The Mamluks were aware that in order to keep the Crusaders from Cyprus at bay, they would require significant power.³¹³ This showed why the former centers along the coast were destroyed and forbidden to be recovered. These centers could have been easily captured by the Crusader fleets. The Mamluks destroyed the coastal settlement of the Mīnā, but they didn't allow Tripoli to disappear. Instead, they created a new Tripoli that was located inland. Hence, even though the new Tripoli was not situated on the coast, it remained as a city and main administrative centre.

The region saw the establishment of new Mamluk administrative centers, including the rebuilt Tripoli, Latakia, Qal'at al-Ḥuṣn, Qal'at al-Marqab, Qal'at Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, Qal'at al-Maḥāliba, and 'Akkār.³¹⁴ Remarkably that its latter castle was demolished during the battle between the Mamluks and the Crusaders.³¹⁵ No detailed sources were found about the capture of the Mount Pilgrim (Montpèlerin) by the Mamluks, so it is not easy to know about the number of destructions in the region. Most probably, the basic elements of the infrastructure of the Crusader town were not damaged and were easily reused later after the removal of debris. The streets and alleys, bridges, and parts of the water supply system like canals, wells, and cisterns were reused and managed to be helpful for the new settlements.³¹⁶

³¹³ Fuess A. , 2001, p. 46

³¹⁴ Al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, IV/144-145.

³¹⁵ Al-Sharīf, 1987, pp. 88-89

³¹⁶ Vermeulen, U. and K. D'Hulster , 2010, p. 318

In 1326, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa mentioned that Tripoli was "traversed by flowing streams and surrounded by gardens and trees".³¹⁷ Certain important castles in the rural neighbourhood, which were constructed by the Ismā'īlīs especially, remained in use for a certain period. Still the sources are mostly silent about them after the second half of the 15th century.³¹⁸ Besides, the rural towers and the agricultural centres weren't able to do their proper and former roles.

The Mongol armies invaded Syria in 1299, 1300, 1303, and 1312 and won over the Mamluks in the third battle of Homs in 1299, .³¹⁹ The military activity did not stop with the expulsion of the Crusaders, as the European fleets continued to produce troubles on the coastline with frequent raids, in 1366 and 1367 in Tripoli but sacking Ṭarṭūs and Latakia as well.³²⁰ It was clear that during the Mamluk period, there was famine and a seriously weakened population who were more susceptible and more frequently hit by epidemics.³²¹ The severest one was the Black Death of 1347-48 .³²²

Crusader raids were also made in 1378 when Yelbuga was the deputy of Tripoli.

*"... the mail of Tarābulus said that the Franks came to it in 10 ships and they came down to land, so they were fought by Amīr Yalbuga al-Nāsirī the nā'ib of Ṭarābulus and he killed several of them, and the rest fled to their ships and left,"*³²³

The sources mentioned that there was a split in the Mamluk army, due to the Mamluks who were against the Barqūq who replaced Yelbuga in 1367 and became Emir in 1382.³²⁴ Barqūq wasn't a sultan anymore and was imprisoned in the Crac ³²⁵ but in 1390 he was again elected as sultan.³²⁶ In the years 1378,1387 and 1401, the Franks attacked

³¹⁷ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Tuḥfat*, tr. Gibb, Travels, p. 88.

³¹⁸ Major B. , 2015, p. 40

³¹⁹ Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, II/319-321; Waterson 2007: 207-213

³²⁰ Amadi, *Chronique*, 410, 417-418

³²¹ Dolls, 1977, pp. 305-314; Tucker, 1999, pp. 119-123

³²² Dolls, 1977, pp. 218-220

³²³ Al Maqrīzī , 1970, p. 335

³²⁴ Muir, 1896, p. 116

³²⁵ Salibi K. , 1992, p. 147

³²⁶ Al-Duwayhī I. , 1951, p. 125

Tripoli.³²⁷ The relationship between the Christians of Mount Lebanon (Bsharrī) and the Emir of Tripoli remained stable.³²⁸ In 1399-1405, Faraj followed his father Barqūq. During his reign, Frankish ships raided Tripoli in 1402.³²⁹ The coastlands were affected by several earthquakes during the Mamluk period. In 1404 was the most damaging one,³³⁰ which was followed by heavy rains and floods and severe cold spells.³³¹ In the same year, Tripoli fell into the hands of Jackam, one of the Mongol generals.³³² The destruction arising from these wars remained until 1422, when there was evidence of restoration activities taking place in the mountains of Lebanon.³³³

As the Medieval period came to a close, there was a significant shift in the relationship between Christians, marked by an improvement in solidarity. In order to show their enemies how strong they were, the Maronites came together and formed an alliance with the Roman Church.

To sum up, this chapter illustrates the geographical features of the studied region and its complexity along with its different historical phases. The geographical study highlights the strategical importance of the Lebanese coast; hence, the historical part is characterized by a rich cultural heritage that can be traced back to various civilizations. Additionally, it highlights the cultural and political landscape of the region. Besides, this chapter shows the diverse religious community such as Christian denominations - Syriac, Orthodox, and Maronite - several other Islamic denominations were established in Lebanon after the Muslim conquest, including Sunni, Shī'a, 'Alawī, and Drūz, all of which had already been established by the time the Latin Christians arrived.

The Crusader era lasted from 1095 until 1291 and a substantial cultural interchange occurred between the Crusaders and the local Muslim and Christian inhabitants, leaving an indelible mark on the art, architecture, and social standards. As a whole, this chapter clarifies

³²⁷ Al Maqrīzī , 1970, pp. 335,562,1079

³²⁸ Salibi K. , 1992, pp. 66-69

³²⁹ Al Maqrīzī , 1970, p. 1079

³³⁰Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, VI/104; Ambraseys, 2009, pp. 382-383

³³¹ Tucker, 1999, pp. 114-117

³³² Al Maqrīzī , 1970, p. 1122, Ibn al Qilā'ī, 1982, pp. 45-54

³³³ Lapidus M. I., 1967, p. 9

the intricate connection between geographical attributes and the historical progression of the analysed region, a relationship that will be further demonstrated in subsequent chapters.

5. SETTLEMENT

Despite the limited availability of contemporary written sources on the settlements, previous studies and the recent discovery of sites, it is evident that the region has a very dense network of settlements. The configuration consisted of two main elements: the coastal towns and the vast network of villages in their rural hinterland. The influential metropolises of Antioch and Tripoli brought about advantages for both entities due to their proximity. The system underwent a profound transformation from the 6th century onwards, largely influenced by the Islamic conquests, leading to a notable impact.³³⁴ As a result of the initial phase of conquest, the majority of coastal towns were destroyed, causing Antioch to become a relatively insignificant border town. Due to the disconnection from previous markets and sea routes, the coastal region, which faced economic disadvantages, redirected its focus internally. From the 10th century onward, a complex array of fortifications began to spring up due to the lack of a central government.³³⁵

The arrival of the Crusades and the settlement of the Franks brought about significant changes, especially by revitalizing Antioch and Tripoli as important centres of power. This European connection of the Levantine coast to Mediterranean trade had a positive ripple effect on the hinterland of coastal towns. The Franks, more focused on rural development than the Muslim elite, made substantial investments in the countryside.

According to a geographical analysis, it has been found that the western Lebanon mountain range and the Lebanese coast played a major role in the formation of the county of Tripoli, accounting for almost 80% of its total land area. Apart from that, these regions represented a significant proportion of the land area owned by the Kingdom of Jerusalem, accounting for roughly 20%. While the Bekka Valley was mostly under the control of the Fatimids, the Seljuks and then the Ayyubids, the Franks made a slow but steady takeover of the coastal cities, focusing their efforts on fortification.³³⁶ Among the cities that they

³³⁴ Dussaud, 1941

³³⁵ *Ibid*

³³⁶ Dussaud, 1941; Balard, 2001, pp. 22-32

occupied and fortified were Tyre, Sidon,³³⁷ Beirut,³³⁸ Jbail,³³⁹ Batrūn,³⁴⁰ 'Anfah,³⁴¹ Tripoli,³⁴² , Artūzī, which is also referred to as al-Bārid³⁴³ and 'Arqā.³⁴⁴

Feudalism was the key factor that determined the administrative and territorial organization of this society, on which it was heavily dependent.³⁴⁵ The division of each country into provinces paved the way for an innovative approach to managing its social and economic affairs and military protection. They achieved this by assigning a group of knights to specific geographical areas based on the hierarchy of the subordinate lordships, whose borders usually followed those of administrative areas that had existed previously under Muslim rule. Under this kind of feudalism, each knight was responsible for protecting the assigned area and taking care of the needs of its inhabitants, including farmers and artisans. An important aspect of their duties was to focus on the development of agriculture, which was essential for the region's sustenance and the provision and equipment of knights to serve in the army of the count, prince or king. The senior knights held lordships, which were established in each state through the division into fiefs and cities.

The distribution of lands in the County of Tripoli involved assigning them to several fortified cities and lordships.³⁴⁶ The territories were divided into baronies, with a total of nine of them located specifically on Lebanese territory. The names of these baronies were Tripoli (al- Mīnā), Gibelacar ('Akkār al-'Atīqā),³⁴⁷ Nephin ('Anfah), Besmedin (Besmeddīn),³⁴⁸ Puy du Connétable (Musayliha),³⁴⁹ Boutron (Batrūn), Calmont (Qalamūn),³⁵⁰ Buissera (Bsharrī),³⁵¹ and Gibelet (Jubayl).³⁵²

³³⁷ RRH, no. 80

³³⁸ RRH, no. 72; Mayer, Two Unpublished Letters on the Syrian Earthquake of 1202, 1972

³³⁹ Balard, 2001, p. 191; Deschamps P., 1973, pp. 9,205,208

³⁴⁰ *Ibid* p.9; RRH no. 1102

³⁴¹ Deschamps P. , 1973, p. 324; Nordiguian & Voisin, 1999, p. 363; RRH no. 535c; RRH 1893-1904, p. 211

³⁴² RRH no.55; RRH no. 88; Balard, 2001, pp. 49-51

³⁴³ Boulanger, 1955, p. 122

³⁴⁴ RRH no. 581; Thalman J. , 1991, p. 22; Chaaya A. , 2016, pp. 12-14

³⁴⁵ RRH, no. 212

³⁴⁶ Salamé- Sarkis, 1980, pp. 18-23; Chaaya A. , 2007, pp. 141-143

³⁴⁷ RRH, no 477; Thibaud & Voisin , 2000, pp. 149-163; Ibn Shaddād, 1962, p. 113; Richard J. , 1945, p. 94

³⁴⁸ Rey E. , 1895, p. 413

³⁴⁹ Röhrich 1893, doc.55 and 1444

³⁵⁰ Yāqūt Al-Rūmī, 1995, p. 271

³⁵¹ RRH, no.218; Cartulaire du Saint-Sépulchre= Le cartulaire du chapitre du Saint-Sépulchre de Jérusalem, 1984:pp.194-197

³⁵² Deschamps P. , 1973, pp. 9,205-215; Balard, 2001, p. 191

These are the main lordships mentioned in the written sources, the historians. Each lordship normally served as the lord's administrative headquarters and from which it took its name. As example, the lord of Batrūn would normally have been based in Batrūn, or if he wasn't at any rate have been a steward to administer it on his behalf. Apart from relying on administrative organization and feudal institutions, the Franks also used geographical borders and employed a military strategy that made off the natural topography, especially in the border areas, across all their territories. A large number of the natural boundaries from the east are formed by land masses that have deep valleys.

Categorizing settlement patterns in the Crusader Holy Land,³⁵³ is challenging and has sparked considerable debate.³⁵⁴ A classification system has been adopted in order to combine previous research findings with the material presented by the sources and the results of the survey. This system features three broad categories: towns, fortified sites, and rural settlements. Apart from the capital, Tripoli, some of the settlements may have been little more than oversized villages, if only symbolically in some cases. Similar work was done in the Syrian coastal region but based on the field survey done by the Syro-Hungarian Archaeological Mission SHAM, more evidence clarified the different categories that define the typologies which are pretty similar to the characteristics found in this current studied region.³⁵⁵

The rural areas surrounding towns exhibited numerous fortified sites, displaying significant variation in terms of size, design, and purpose. Among the structures were grand castles, smaller fortified rural centres, courtyard houses, churches and inhabited caves. The castles, along with their adjacent suburbs, accommodated a larger population compared to numerous neighbouring settlements, like villages, thereby effectively fulfilling the economic and administrative roles of a town. Consequently, they served as pivotal locations in the rural settlement arrangement, integrating numerous villages. Unfortunately, the medieval written records fail to document these smaller villages sufficiently, making it difficult to establish clear boundaries and classify individual sites precisely. Consequently, some sites will be

³⁵³ Prawer, 1980; Riley-Smith J. , 1973, pp. 62-98; Pringle R. , 1997a, pp. 3-6

³⁵⁴ Ellenblum, 2007, pp. 73-102; Pringle R. , 2008, pp. 180-183.

³⁵⁵ Major B. , 2015

subject to ongoing analysis, and the classification of others may change as more evidence emerges from additional research.

The areas with the greatest concentration of rural settlements are predominantly greatly situated near to the big towns on the fertile agricultural plains. The rural settlements positioning starts at an approximate distance of 4 km radius from the towns. The interconnection of these elements was facilitated by a network of routes, consisting of both land and water routes, and supplemented by additional infrastructural components usually positioned outside the residential areas of the settlements. Based on the available sources, the quantity of their remains was significant. According to the available sources, 110 sites have been mentioned. Out of these 29 sites have been mentioned in the Latin sources, while about 81 other sites have been mentioned by scholars and travellers. In addition to that, one site was discovered which was never mentioned before and 10 sites were discovered by K. Bartl to have a total of 121 sites. (**Table 2**) The two main dense areas of rural settlements in the region under study are the area between Tripoli in the north, Batrūn in the south and Bsharrī in the east, which is denser than the area bounded by Nahr al-Kabīr al-Janūbī in the north, ‘Arqā in the south and ‘Akkār al-‘Atīqā in the east, based on the only surviving sources and field survey.

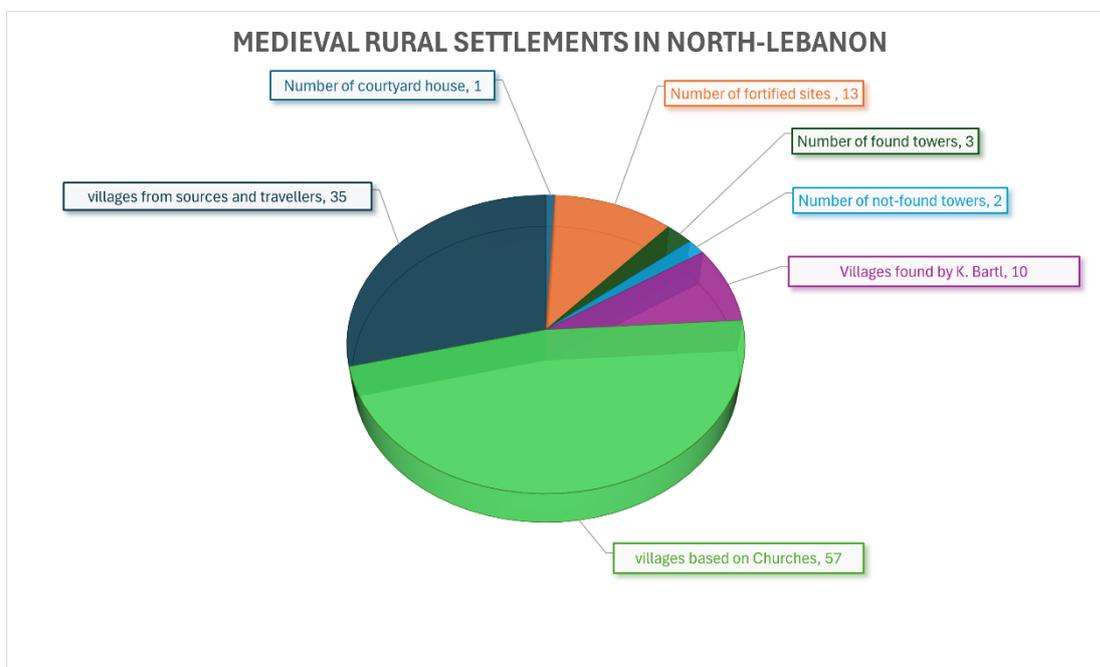


Fig. 1-Diagram showing number of medieval rural settlements in North Lebanon dating to the 12th and 13th centuries.

5.1. Centres of the medieval settlements pattern.

The settlement history of a given region is excessively dependent on the fortunes of its centre, and this is especially true in the highly urbanised medieval Levant. Urban centres therefore played an important role in the ecclesiastical, economic and administrative fields. The region had smaller urban centres, which can be listed in order of considered importance: Tripoli, 'Arqā, 'Anfah, and Batrūn.

The task of determining the precise roles these towns played within their surrounding regions remains challenging owing to fragmented documentation. However, a general understanding of their importance as economic centres can be gleaned. The Franks' arrival and the subsequent establishment of their states had a profound impact on the revitalization of Mediterranean trade routes that had been neglected for centuries, as these routes heavily relied on European supply. The Crusader economy, fundamentally anchored in maritime trade, consequently led to the concentration of the most significant towns of the period along the Levantine coast.

Identifying a site as a town is often difficult, especially when trying to define what a town is and what constitutes it in the context of the Latin East.³⁵⁶ The town could be associated with the presence of bishops, indicating their ecclesiastical importance, or the existence of institutions such as "*cour des bourgeois*" suggests a degree of economic vitality, or administrative centres, as this term typically refers to a court or assembly of the bourgeois class involved in trade and commerce.

The main centre of the region was Tripoli, which was the capital of the county.³⁵⁷ The town was prosperous, populated and industrialised.³⁵⁸ What is today known as Tripoli was just a small suburb when the Crusaders were getting ready to attack the ancient city of Tripoli, which was located beside the sea in the area now known as al-Mīnā.³⁵⁹ Tripoli had a very flourishing port, which saw the transit of a wide variety of products between the Syrian interior and the ports of the West.³⁶⁰ When preparing for the siege of the ancient city al-Mīnā, the Franks constructed a siege castle called Mons Pelerin, under which a new

³⁵⁶ Kedar, 2009, pp. 199-209

³⁵⁷ Richard J. , 1945, p. 58

³⁵⁸ Ibn al-Athīr, 1963, pp. 34-36

³⁵⁹ *Ibid* p.36

³⁶⁰ Jidejian, 2007, pp. 73-78

suburb gradually developed. In addition to the port and the city of al-Mīnā, the Franks undertook the development of the ancient suburb where most of the buildings that still bear their imprint can be found.³⁶¹

Among these buildings is the church of Saint S epulcre of Mons P elerin.³⁶² On the hill of Mons Pelerin stood the church of Saint John the Baptist, and a cemetery of the Hospitaller order.³⁶³ Inside the suburb, there were several monuments, including the cathedral of Saint Marie Latin,³⁶⁴ the building was converted into a mosque in 1294, and the hospice of Saint Jacque was converted into a public bath.³⁶⁵ Two churches were also converted into mosques, one at the southern entrance to the city and the other known as the al ‘Aṭṭ ar mosque.³⁶⁶ The natural protection and accessibility to the sea made the coastal peninsula on which al-M in a stood an ideal location for early urban development. The city was relocated inland to the foot of the castle after the destruction of old Tripoli by the Mamluks.³⁶⁷ Tripoli possessed a remarkable harbour and a highly fertile agricultural landscape that contributed to its status as a thriving metropolis, ensuring the prosperity of its surrounding rural regions.³⁶⁸

Extensive scientific investigations and scholarly research have conclusively identified another ancient city of ‘Arq a as the “Tall ‘Arq a Archaeological Site.”³⁶⁹ ‘Arq a, situated in the ‘Akk ar Governorate, is of historical significance due to its strategic location at the entrance of the Homs Gap, a major communication route connecting with inland Syria. Hence, the militarily strategic position of ‘Arq a prompted successive civilizations to utilize it as a crucial control point over the span of several centuries.³⁷⁰ The Orthodox see of ‘Arq a became a part of the Latin see of Tripoli after the Crusader conquest.³⁷¹ In 1119, Pope Calixtus II confirmed the granting of the church of Arqa to the Hospital by the bishop of

³⁶¹ Salame-Sarkis, H. , 1980, pp. 123-136

³⁶² Salameh Sarkis, 1983, p. 129

³⁶³ Salame-Sarkis, H. , 1980, p. 95

³⁶⁴ Richard J. , 1945, p. 59

³⁶⁵ Enlart C. , 1925, p. 430

³⁶⁶ Salam e- Sarkis, 1980, p. 28

³⁶⁷ Piana M. , 2010, pp. 307-354; Fuess A. , 2009, pp. 218-223

³⁶⁸ RRH no.55; RRH no. 88; Balard, 2001, pp. 49-51

³⁶⁹ Thalmann J. , 1991, p. 22

³⁷⁰ Chaaya A. , 2016, pp. 12-14

³⁷¹ Hamilton B. , 1980, p. 140

Tripoli.³⁷² The Hospitaller Knights were in charge of managing and maintaining 'Arqā fortress in 1170.³⁷³ In 1289, after the fall of 'Arqā into the Mamluks hands, ³⁷⁴ it was completely destroyed and its stones were used to build the new city of Tripoli.³⁷⁵ In the era of the Crusades, 'Arqā played was a military stronghold for the counts of Tripoli.³⁷⁶ It had a castle,³⁷⁷ two defensive walls indicating a relatively large settlement,³⁷⁸ and the archaeological investigations mention the presence of two towers excavated.³⁷⁹

Moving south on the coastal road the next port in line with Tripoli, 'Anfah, nestled between the cities of Tripoli and Batrūn.³⁸⁰ 'Anfah, known as *Nephein* during the Crusades, was at its peak during this period. It was a well-fortified village and the seat of a barony within the County of Tripoli, ruled by the Raynouard family. In 1212, Wilbrand of Oldenburg described the fertility of the land and its renowned wine, which was approved by Burchard de Mont-Sion during his visit in 1283.³⁸¹ The barony experienced considerable turbulence under Raynouard II (1174-1196) and Raynouard III (1196-1206), who rebelled against their suzerain, Bohemond IV. In 1206, Bohemond IV, with the support of John I of Ibelin and the Genoese, besieged and took 'Anfah, forcing Raynouard III to surrender the castle.³⁸² In February 1282, 'Anfah became the scene of a major conflict when Guy II of Jubayl, the Genoese and the Templars conspired against Bohemond VII. Bohemond emerged victorious, as already mentioned, executing the Genoese and burying Guy and his family alive in the castle of 'Anfah.³⁸³ In 1289, the Mamluk sultan Qalaoun conquered the county of Tripoli, which led to the destruction of 'Anfah Castle, which was probably dismantled and used as a quarry.³⁸⁴

³⁷² *Ibid* p.105, CGOH, no. 48

³⁷³ Deschamps P. , 1973, p. 160; Cartulaire=Cartulaire général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem (1100-1310), 4 vols, 1894-1906, pp. 284-286 n.411; RRH, n.d., p. 125 n.477

³⁷⁴ Will, 1975, p. 44; Chaaya A. , 2016, pp. 12-36

³⁷⁵ Leriche, 1983, pp. 113-132

³⁷⁶ Deschamps P. , 1935, p. 160;

³⁷⁷ RRH 1170, no 477

³⁷⁸ Richard J. , 1945, pp. 366-369; RRH 1179, no.581

³⁷⁹ Chaaya A. , 2016, pp. 29-30

³⁸⁰ RRH 1893-1904, p. 211

³⁸¹ Deschamps P. , 1973, p. 300

³⁸² Richard J. , 1945; Rey G. , 1869, pp. 413-415

³⁸³ Deschamps P. , 1973, pp. 297-301

³⁸⁴ Salame-Sarkis, 1999 , pp. 81-83

From the events of the conflict between Guy II, lord of Jubayl, and the Templar Order and the count of Tripoli, when Guy II was brought before a court of justice held in Nephin and sentenced to death, it may be inferred that in 'Anfah there was a burgh court (*cour des bourgeois*) which is a court of judgement.³⁸⁵ Apart from the city walls that separated the height of Rās 'Anfah and protected the city from the land, other architectural elements show the importance and the different characteristics of the town; the castle, which used to be in on the peninsula,³⁸⁶ the towers and fortified sites that are associated to it.³⁸⁷ The existence of religious sites, three churches in the town is a testament to the importance of the site during the Frankish era. These churches are: Mār Sim'ān and Mār Mikhā'īl,³⁸⁸ Saint Katrīnā Church,³⁸⁹ and the Church of Our Lady of the Wind.³⁹⁰

Batrūn (Botron/Batroun), was a small settlement rarely mentioned, it was for sure bigger than a village and was a bishopric during the Byzantine time. The former Orthodox diocese was incorporated into the diocese of Tripoli, which in theory, and according to the succession of popes, was subject to the archbishop of Tyre, and patriarch of Jerusalem, but in practice submitted to the authority of the Latin patriarch of Antioch.³⁹¹ Al-'Idrīsī mentions that the castle of Batrūn was in good condition.³⁹² One of the lords of Batrūn, had a seal that bears the castle on the reverse with the words *Castellum Botroni*.³⁹³ Batrūn was, for the most part, a small town which, despite not having a bishop, was quite prosperous, and so was the area around it. The Crusader Batrūn had a small port,³⁹⁴ and a castle surrounded by houses.³⁹⁵ The Batrūn fort had an opening on its eastern side, leading to a plain renowned for its wine production, which served as a reliable source of supplies.³⁹⁶ It is extremely difficult to piece together the history of Batrūn during this period, as there are only a limited

³⁸⁵ Rey E. , 1869, p. 324; Rey E. , 1895, pp. 406-407

³⁸⁶ Salamé-Sarkis, 1999, pp. 83-84

³⁸⁷ Chaaya A. , 2015

³⁸⁸ Nordiguan & Voisin, 1999, p. 131

³⁸⁹ *ibid*, p. 131-132; note 243, Coupel, 1941

³⁹⁰ Nordiguan & Voisin, 1999, pp. 381-382, Enlart C. , 1925, p. 110

³⁹¹ Hamilton B. , 1980, pp. 18-51; Richard J. , 1945, pp. 58-62

³⁹² al-'Idrīsī., 1994, p. 57

³⁹³ Description in Jean-Claude Cheynet, Cécile morisson, Werner seibt (eds.), *Les sceaux byzantins de la collection Henri Seyrig*. Catalogue raisonné, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, n° 380

³⁹⁴ Salamé-Sarkis, 1987, p. 33

³⁹⁵ *Ibid* pp. 114-118.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid*; Boulanger, 1955, p. 123

number of notable events, often occurring far apart from each other.³⁹⁷ The town of Batrūn was most probably ensuring the prosperity of its surrounding rural regions like Qubba and Ḥamāt.³⁹⁸

The towns mentioned in the text are closely linked to the surrounding rural landscape. This link reflects the interaction between urban and rural settlements in the medieval coastal region. The nuanced relationship between the urban and rural components is evident in this transformation, illustrating how the development of a strategic suburb played a key role in the overall urbanisation process. They served as local centres for a network of villages linked by land and water routes and were an integral part of the medieval landscape. The original city of Tripoli, for example, was strategically located on a peninsula. It was besieged for a long time, which prompted the Crusaders to build a castle, and a suburban settlement called "*rabaḍ*". This suburb was initially like a rural enclave with its proximity to gardens. However, it eventually developed into a proper city.

³⁹⁷ Salamé-Sarkis, 1987, pp. 34-35

³⁹⁸ Boulanger, 1955, p. 123

6. THE FORTIFIED CENTRES OF THE COUNTRYSIDE

6.1. The Rabaḍ.

The medieval settlements along the coast include a distinct category of settlement type characterized by fortifications in varying sizes and qualities. The presence of these fortifications in the rural areas serves as a common indicator of medieval settlement. A particular factor of the appearance of castles and towers was the arrival of the Crusaders, who consolidated their authority over the coastal regions by constructing fortifications.³⁹⁹ Reflecting a European tradition, these fortifications frequently served as both residences and administrative hubs for the emerging elite.

The overall pattern of settlements was greatly shaped by a group of fortifications that date back to the Crusader period. As a result of the scarcity of available historical sources, some sites have inevitably been missed while not all of those mentioned are sufficiently documented. None the less, the studied region encompasses a total of 121 sites, of which 13 have been confirmed as fortified. According to the sources, the Hospitallers possessed the majority of these sites, with 10 out of the 13 fortified sites had a castle. (**Table 2**)

Despite the apparent dominance of the Hospitallers, it is likely that a more balanced comparison between Hospitaller and Templar castles could have been achieved if the Templar documents had survived in equal abundance. Additionally, there were indeed castles under Templar ownership that go unmentioned in the Latin sources. Consequently, it is not practical to provide even a rough estimation of the territory, or the number of settlements associated with the castles in the coastal area.

The term "*rabaḍ*" in Arabic or *suburbium*, *bourg* or *faubourgs* in Latin documents is commonly used to describe a medieval settlement or suburb that is closely linked to a castle or fortified location in the majority of cases. In the domain of historical research, specifically focusing on the medieval Levant, the term "*rabaḍ*" is frequently used to indicate civilian settlements that are directly connected to a castle or stronghold.

³⁹⁹ Pringle D. , 1986a, p. 13

Within the broader historical and architectural discourse, the relationship between fortified structures and the surrounding community during the medieval period is a topic of considerable importance. The specific characteristics and traits of a "*rabaḍ*" can vary, and the term lacks a precise definition, often encompassing various types of settlements that are associated with a castle.

Tall ʿArqā is an example of a site having a suburb. It was allegedly a town connected to the castle, which itself was large in area. The suburb is said to have had: a 10x10 m tower and parts of the fortification walls, some water channels,⁴⁰⁰ houses that are difficult to locate and leave little evidence of their existence, which were reportedly built using only "*whitewash and earth*".⁴⁰¹ It was probably positioned beside the castle on the eastern plateau. Its size is estimated to be 17000 m² and is not that extremely large, compared to the inner and outer suburbs of Margat Castle in Syria which are much larger. However in it there might have been more than one ecclesiastical foundations as the Genoese are mentioned as having their own in 1179.⁴⁰²

The only castle mentioned in the contemporary sources as having had a *rabaḍ* was the site of ʿAkkār.⁴⁰³ The site is located at an altitude of 700 m in the mountain range of Jabal ʿAkkār, which is situated to the northeast of Tripoli. The site of ʿAkkār lies on the northern foothills of Mount Lebanon and occupies a rocky peak between two streams. The fortification was named after ibn ʿAkkār, then the whole mountain was named after the castle itself. The castle is located on a rise that is distinguished by being cut off from the plateau behind, it has a small suburb, and a village located to the north of the site.⁴⁰⁴ Some area of the spur still preserves the remains of a powerful defensive system overlooking the access road to the castrum. Only a few rare remains of the houses can be seen, as the remaining of the fortified area was converted into cultivable terraces when the castle was abandoned. This development completed the disappearance of the remains of the fortified village, whose architecture must have been much more fragile than that of the fortifications. The surface of

⁴⁰⁰ Chaaya A. , 2016, pp. 29-30

⁴⁰¹ Ibn Shaddād, 1962, p. 92

⁴⁰² http://crusadesregesta.com/database?search_api_views_fulltext=archas&field_institution_recipient=&field_grantor=&field_receptient=&field_year_1=&field_year=&field_term_type_field_term_title=

⁴⁰³ al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ = Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā fī ṣināʿat al-inshā*, p.150

⁴⁰⁴ Thibaud & Voisin , 2000, pp. 149-163; Ibn Shaddād, 1962, p. 113; Richard J. , 1945, p. 94

the habitable area or the village in the rabaḍ was around 5650 sqm and the whole rabaḍ was 7900 sqm.⁴⁰⁵

Given that control over crucial passageways was not part of its purview, the ‘Akkār site was primarily used to protect or controlling a nearby settlement situated at the bottom of one of the fertile, wooded valleys in northern Lebanon, or as a forward base for launching raids on the Biqā‘ (Bekaa).⁴⁰⁶

The rise of the Military Orders, greatly hastened by the upheavals of 1187-88, resulted in a profound restructuring of the settlement distribution during the 13th century. As the ancient cities along the Levantine coast diminished in size and number, the fortified centres established by the Military Orders from the early 13th century onward developed into settlements that had the capability to rival towns or even smaller cities in various aspects. The mountain fringes that bordered the plain of ‘Akkār, serving as the primary road to Tripoli from Syria, contained the most heavily fortified strongpoints. In the list of sites, there are places like ‘Akkār al-‘Atīqā,⁴⁰⁷ and Qulay‘āt which are classified as fortified strongpoints.

6.2. Fortification.

6.2.1. Case Study 1. - Qulay‘āt castle.

The castle of Qulay‘āt is considered as one of the preserved castles belonging to the Military Orders. In 1127, the Count of Tripoli donated the site to the Order of St John, and that was the first time when the site was mentioned. A further mention occurs in 1153, but neither of these two texts uses the term *castrum* or *castellum*.⁴⁰⁸ The castle’s Arabic name Qulay‘āt, which appears in French as “la Colée”, means ‘small fortress’.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁵ Fournet & Voisin, 2000, pp. 158-161

⁴⁰⁶ Abū Shāma, *Dzayl*, 126.

⁴⁰⁷ Thibaud & Voisin, 2000, pp. 149-163

⁴⁰⁸ Deschamps P., 1973, pp. 311-312

⁴⁰⁹ Dussaud, 1927, pp. 89-91

During the campaign against the Hospitallers in 1207-1208, Sultan al-‘Ādil Sayf al-Dīn, brother of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, seized the castle and destroyed it. Sultan Baybars occupied the castle in 1266, along with Ḥalbā and Tall ‘Arqā. It is unlikely that the Crusaders recaptured the site.⁴¹⁰ In 1282, a treaty between the Knights Templar of Tortosa and the Sultan of Egypt listed Qulay‘āt among the Muslim possessions, along with, Ḥalbā, ‘Arqā, Tībū. It is likely that the site lost any strategic role after the capture of Tripoli by Qalāwūn in 1289.⁴¹¹ After that the fortress disappears from history, like all the other small fortresses that lost their military significance in the new kingdom and state under Mamluk rule.

Given that this castle was situated on a significant hill in the north-western part of the ‘Akkār plain, beside the primary roadways, its significance cannot be understated. It also overlooks a broad fertile plain, potentially of considerable economic value. A significant function of the castle and its castellan was presumably to oversee and manage the Hospitallers’ estates in the region. This would require maintaining a stronghold to which the annual renders of grain and other crops levied from the local people could be gathered before being sent for sale in Tripoli or elsewhere. The castle was seemingly established by the Hospitaller knights, during the first phase of the Frankish occupation. It seems that the early twelfth-century form of the castle was never really developed into the thirteenth-century concentric design. The castle kept its first-phase characteristics in the later periods as a unique testimony of the first-generation castles of the Military Orders. Its rectangular enclosure had rectangular corner and interval towers that hardly jugged out from the line of the walls. The rounded towers so characteristic of the later castles of the Hospitallers never appeared here. The site itself was a useful assembly point for troops at the edge of the plain and the entrance of Tripoli and served as a military barracks and administrative centre during peaceful times.

Although being of high importance and endangered by the encroachment of recent developments, the site has never been properly documented. The drawing of a simple plan in the 1930s has not been followed by any elevation or section drawings of any kind. For a general architectural survey, the castle was 3D modelled using photogrammetry. There have already been references in chapter 1 to the fact that the survey of the different study cases

⁴¹⁰ Abu’l-Fiḍā’, 1983, p. 151

⁴¹¹ Richard J. , 1972, p. 352

was carried out in accordance with SfM methodology, which has been used on many other sites in various other countries from different periods of history. The results obtained have been very positive and have allowed for an accurate analysis of the different study cases.

This particular castle necessitated the development of a methodology for surveying that would be tailored to the circumstances of the site. The resulting survey was able to capture the intricate details of the castle walls and structures. The layout and topography of the surrounding area was also accurately captured. The method of processing and the final result had to be adapted to the low budget and limited time available in Lebanon. In January 2020, 3D documentation of the castle's exterior shell was completed. By using drone which flew at an altitude of 10 m, around 500 pictures were taken. Four hours of flying were needed to cover the entire surface of the castle. Because of the encroachment of modern buildings, some of which are even beginning to touch the outer north-eastern face of the castle, using the drone in such a region was quite challenging. The castle's state of abandonment, with high trees and climbing plants covering parts of the face, made the survey more complicated.

As for the interior spaces, the photos were taken with Nikon D7200 using AF-S Nikkor 18-105mm lens. The different spaces were surveyed in August 2020, and the missing parts were surveyed in June 2022. As a result, the number of pictures taken for each space depended on the surface and the area that needed to be documented. For example, for the small corner towers, 200 -400 photographs were taken, while for the vaulted space 3.0-5.0, 800 - 1200 pictures were taken to cover the full space, illustrated in the cross-sections of spaces 3.0-5 and 8.0 respectively below in the renders and the 3D documentation section. In recent years, the castle has been used as an animal shelter. This led to incomplete documentation of the interior spaces and, to the need to make several visits at different times of the year over the four years of the doctoral programme to complete the documentation.

The results of these visits helped to create an accurate description of the castle's spaces. Additionally, the visits enabled the project to gain a better understanding of the castle's history and development. As a result, the alignment of the exterior 3D model and the interior spaces' 3D models was done on the basis of the GPS coordinates from the drone footage, together with a few additional measurements to ensure accuracy. This information was then used to create a detailed 3D model of the castle that was used for the project's purposes. The model was created with a high level of detail and accuracy, enabling the project to have a realistic and precise representation of the castle. On the basis of the data

collected on-site and the orthophoto taken from the 3D model, an accurate and detailed 2D plan was drawn in Autodesk AutoCAD. The sections and façade were studied for a better periodization of the castle. The plan will be used to help trace the history of the castle and its evolution over time. The 3D model can also be used as a reference for future conservation and potential restoration. The data collected could also be used to create a virtual tour of the castle in the future.

Architecturally, today the castle partially remains on a single level. (**Fig. 2**) Qulay'āt castle has a roughly square enclosure of 63.90 by 56.20 m, flanked by slightly projecting rectangular towers at the four corners, each measuring about 7.50 by 8.50 m. Like several fortified sites constructed by the Military Orders in the middle of the twelfth century, such as the first Hospitaller period of the Crac des Chevaliers and Belvoir, the castle show a series of rooms surrounding an open courtyard. Qulay'āt castle covers an area of around 3,300 m² with a courtyard of 1,770 m². It was enclosed by a rock-cut ditch, 8-10 m wide and 1.50 m deep at present. Its original depth is undeterminable due to the debris inside. No traces that could assure or deny the idea of having water in the ditch to be used as a protection of the castle. Therefore, another possible idea could be mentioned given its relatively high position, it might have been used as a *birka* (an open cistern) at certain times of the year where rainwater was collected.

It is evident that it subsequently underwent several phases of modification during the medieval period, due to the attacks and earthquakes already mentioned, especially the earthquake of 1202. These different phases are attested by the different ashlar sizes and different types of mortars used in between the ashlars. The Hospitallers castle follows a very regular layout that emphasizes a functional organization and a unified plan.

During the 2019-2022 seasons, a comprehensive plan of the remaining rooms of Crac des Chevaliers castle in preparation for the UNESCO world heritage project was also requested to be prepared. As members of the Syro-Hungarian Archaeological Mission (SHAM) of the Pázmány Péter Catholic University, out duty was to produce plans for the castle in the shortest time possible. A codification system was created that can adapt and provide an organized system for any future work. The following description uses a codification system similar to that of Crac.



Fig. 2-Periodization plan of Qulay'āt castle.

6.2.1. Description of Qulay'āt castle.

The first phase, illustrated in yellow, shows the castle's outer wall flanked by only a slightly projecting rectangular tower at each of the four corners. The main gate was located in the eastern wall in wall section 1.0. The wall shows the remaining jutting stones which attest to the former existence of an extension to the remaining arch. (Fig. 3) There was a gate, in the middle tower of the northern wall space 14.0, whose remaining blocked opening is still

visible with a double arch inside the space. It presents a large opening revealed in the western wall, 10.0, showing a contemporary gate with an irregular shape (**Fig. 4**).



Fig. 3-Main entrance of the castle space 1 eastern façade.



Fig. 4-Contemporary opening in the western wall.



Fig. 5-The remaining northwestern corner of tower 7.

Three towers, 2.o, 12.o, and 16.o remain standing, and the traces of the fourth tower, tower 7.o are visible, (**Fig. 5**). Tower 2.o, the “gold room”, as the locals name it, is a dark room on the northeast side of the structure – locals believe that it houses a treasure protected by a ghost. (**Fig. 6**) This space presents a clear cut visible in the interior of the space, (**Fig. 7**) where the eastern wall shows two different sizes of ashlar the left dates back from the first phase, (**Fig. 8**) along with the northern wall and the western wall, and the right side of the northern wall along with the southern wall dates from the second phase (**Fig. 9**), represented in red colour. Having opening numbers 2.o.2, 2.o.5, and 3.o.2, similar style and size approximately, makes it much more certain that they are built during the same period of time. The two openings 2.o.3 and 2.o.4 also show some similarities. All the openings are blocked, due to the later use of the spaces. The outer façades of the northern and half of the eastern wall could not be checked on account of the encroachment of modern buildings. In contrast to the southern façade, together with the other half of the eastern façade and the projecting part of the western façade, where a third type of construction was introduced into the analysis, the blue phase, check (**Fig. 10**) and (**Fig. 11**). In The junction wall of the tower

and the southern façade of space 3.0, stones are dating back to the first phase, (**Fig. 12**) and (**Fig. 13**).



Fig. 6-South face of tower 2 built with smaller size stones.



Fig. 7-Tower 2.0 interior looking southeast.



Fig. 8 – Northern section of the western façade of the castle.



Fig. 9 - Southern section of the western façade.



Fig. 10-Southern façade of tower 2.



Fig. 11 - Eastern end of the western wall with the western face of tower 2 on the right.



Fig. 12-Northern façade of space 3.0.



Fig. 13-Northern façade, of space 3.0 and 5.0.



Fig. 14-Cistern opening in the courtyard.

The range of large vaulted halls located on the southern side of the castle space 3.0, 5.0 and possibly on the northern side space 23.0, very likely contained the rooms of soldiers, stables, a prison, a kitchen, storage spaces, and underground water cisterns (**Fig. 14**). In space 3.0 the vaulted space was added to the southern wall already existing from the first phase, which was built with huge, bossed ashlar of 0.50 to 0.60 m in height, along with space 4.0, the wall and the vault does not show any continuous connection, to consider it as one construction period, shown in (**Fig. 15**) and (**Fig. 16**). In addition to the wall, the outer southern façade was also reconstructed during the same construction phase as the vault covering the space, (**Fig. 17**), (**Fig. 18**) and (**Fig. 19**).



Fig. 15-Aerial photo showing part of the southern façade of the castle with bossed ashlars.



Fig. 16-Southern façade of the castle between towers 2 and 4.



Fig. 17-Southern façade of the tower 4.



Fig. 18-Western façade of tower 4.



Fig. 19-Junction of tower 4 and the space 3.

The walls of the multifunction rooms 3.0, (**Fig. 20**), show remains of putlog holes which indicate the former presence of a first floor or a mezzanine, most probably constructed from wood, (**Fig. 21**), a conclusion also supported by the presence of two arrow slits 4.2.4 and 4.2.5 at a higher level in space 4.2, (**Fig. 22**) and (**Fig. 23**). In the case of space 5.0 the structure exhibits the masonry type of the very first phase. This is even visible from the outer side of the northern wall, where one part is totally of this type. The door 5.0.1, placed on the junction between the two spaces 3.0, (**Fig. 24**), and 5.0, (**Fig. 25**), shows that a few stones from the existing vault in 5.0 were taken out and some others were carved out to be able to integrate the lintel, in contradistinction to the vault of 3.0 which is integrated with the construction. The vault and inner façade are two areas where the limit of this phase is clearly visible. If one directs one's attention to the northern façade, which faces the courtyard, one notices a cut line. The first phase construction wall measures 11 m, while the second phase construction wall measures 6.11 m.



Fig. 20-Inner eastern wall of space 3.0.



Fig. 21-Analytical view of the vault in the space 3.0.



Fig. 22-Inner view of tower 4.



Fig. 23-Junction in between the tower 4.0 and the space 3.0 the vault was added later.



Fig. 24-Current view of space 3.0.



Fig. 25-Picture showing the inner space 5.0.

Two different types of roof opening were recognised. 5.0.6 and 5.0.7 have similar types with the same dimensions, and 5.0.5 has a totally different shape and dimensions, which might be because of the different phases of construction. The walls in the space also show the remains of joist pockets, like in the case of 3.0, and two openings are also placed at a higher level 5.0.3 and 5.0.4; therefore, a mezzanine wooden floor most probably once existed here. The two spaces 5.0 and 6.0 were linked by a door, of which one can see only the lintel, due to the original floor level having been much lower than the present-day floor level. Consequently, most probably space 6.0 was used as a corridor built of wood or some

other material that has not survived. Turning back to the inner northern façade of space 5.0 many joist pockets holes measuring approximately 25 x 30 cm are visible at a height of 3.5m. These might have been from the second phase because, in the wall stretch dating from the second phase they look much more neatly inserted in the wall. Many of the ashlar at a height of 0.73 m have also been hollowed out or removed, perhaps also for structural reasons. As the site seems to have been used throughout the centuries, at least some of the rather irregularly shaped putlog holes might have originated in the post-medieval periods of occupation too.

Space 7.0, as already mentioned, was a square flanking tower where the northern corner is still visible inside 5.0 and 8.0, (**Fig. 26**). A part of the northern wall of the tower is still existing and it is the southern wall of space 8.0. Some remaining stones show the outline of the complete tower. The space was vaulted similarly to space 2.0 as the start of the vault is still visible on site. The northern corner of this tower stands 1.7 m high, measuring from the upper level of the tower, space 7.1. The upper level 7.1 could have been another room on the top, or the so-called battlement, the protected walkways formed by the crenelations and the merlons.



Fig. 26-Remains of Tower 7 and the southern façade.

Space 8.o hosts two fireplaces, one in the northern wall and another in the eastern wall, now demolished and used as a passage. The function of this room was most probably a kitchen accessible from the courtyard with a door 8.o.1 in the northwestern corner of the space, (Fig. 27). This space was inserted only in the second phase with the closing of the multifunctional room 3.o. Joist pockets are visible on the northern and southern walls inside the room, (Fig. 28), and two arrow slits are visible on the western façade starting at a height of 4 m from the floor level, (Fig. 9). The arrow-slits are of the rectangular base type and 1.2 m high. Another floor level, 8.1 might have existed at that time or maybe just a mezzanine as most probably the fireplaces were also used as heating devices at a later phase dating maybe from the 16th century period like in Qal'at Dubayya from the time of Fakhr al-Din.



Fig. 27-Eastern wall of space 8.o.



Fig. 28-Northern wall of space 8.o.



Fig. 29-Door leading to the space 8.o from the courtyard.



Fig. 30-View taken from the top of the space 3.0 looking towards the remains of the corner tower 7 and the space 6.

In the lower south-western corner of the room, (**Fig. 31**) an arrow-slit is also visible from inside and from the western façade and 5.97 m away at the beginning of the wall stretch 9.0 there still exists an arrow slit from the first building phase that is almost identical in shape, size and construction. The hall wall might have had a similar arrow-slit or maybe even two, but was demolished with the incursion of the space 8.0 and with the creation of the new western irregular shape gate, although a small arch still remain visible on the western edge of the opening, which might also be part of a similar arrow slit, (**Fig. 32**). The arrow slit is 1.40m high, 1m wide and 2m deep. The wall is constructed of three different types of stones. The first phase of building at the bottom of the second phase of construction starts from the 10th row of ashlar reaching the 16th row. At the top of the wall comes four rows constructed by the Muslims at a much later date. The upper arrow slit was most probably inserted in the later construction period and differs in shape and in the smaller size of its stones. Such relatively small square ashlar were usually characteristic of early modern constructions.

Tower 10.0 was also a kind of flanking tower, but now only its outer façade remains, constructed of many bossed ashlar measuring 0.45 m in height, apparently belonging to the first phase of construction. In the centre of the tower was an arrow slit, of which only the carved lintel remains. The topmost course of stones in this tower was also mostly built during a later period, which could be the Muslim period. A few stones indicate the direction of a wall existing aligned with wall 9.0 at the northern corner of this tower. This also aligns with the northern stretch of wall 11.0 where the length of walling 4.97 m long shows a similar construction. In this case, the tower would have projected 1.75 m from walls 9.0 and 11.0. This wall might also have had some arrow-slits similar to the one in wall 9.0, judging by the visible arrow-slit on the northern edge of the western façade. The remaining existing wall, which aligns with the façade of the tower, was constructed during another phase, most probably the third phase (indicated in blue in **Fig. 33**). In between the two phases visible in this wall a very small stretch dates from a Muslim phase (indicated in green **Fig. 33**).



Fig. 31-Southwestern corner of space 8.0.



Fig. 32-Western wall of space 8.o.



Fig. 33-Ortho-mosaic of façade tower 10 and wall 11.

The only tower that shows an extra floor level, albeit now mostly collapsed is the western tower (space 12), which being much larger as the rest, might have been the donjon and shows the characteristics of twelfth-century construction. 12.1 is covered by a groin-vault still covered by plaster, the height of which was probably similar or even higher than the simple vaulted room under it 12.0, which is 6 m high (**Fig. 34**). Because of its elevated position, higher than all the rest of the castle it is likely that this upper space was a living area most probably that of the castellan. Also visible on the elevations of this corner tower

are two types of ashlar of different sizes: small, bossed ashlars, 40 cm high, on the upper level of the tower's façade, that might be the result of a reconstruction done during another phase where some stones remaining on site were reused, and simple 60 cm high ashlars with different mortars thicknesses at the bottom.

The bottom of the tower shows bigger ashlar which show the same characteristics as the first yellow phase and the upper part of the tower dates from the second red phase. Arrow-slits, 1.60m high with 10cm wide openings and rectangular bases, are also visible on the southern façade of the same spaces, (**Fig. 35**), on the lower right corner of the western face, (**Fig. 36**), a large rectangular opening for a drainage channel, measuring 60 x 40 cm, was found. From the archive pictures of Paul Deschamps, it appears that access to the tower's upper floor was through an external staircase located on the south façade of the tower. This either does not exist anymore or is more probably hidden under the ruins of the tower's collapsed vault.



Fig. 34-Inner view of space 12.0.



Fig. 35-Tower 12 southern façade.



Fig. 36-North face of Tower 12.



Fig. 37-Bottom corner opening in the north façade and some masons' marks visible.

Continuing clockwise, the remaining wall, 3 m high, if measured from the rock-cut base, 13.0, whose remaining visible stones date back to the first phase of construction (the yellow phase), is assumed to have been constructed in the same way as the wall in space 15.0, where rectangular base arrow-slits were built into the wall are still visible on the northern exterior façade. The remaining wall shows only one stone line lower than the start of the arrow-slit base compared to the arrow-slits present in the 15.0. 15.0 contains four arrow-slits, spaced 5 m apart. Three of them are still recognizable and visible on the north façade and one is broken. The arrow-slits' openings measure 1.12 x 0.12 m. These characteristics show similarities with those of walls 9.0 and 11.0. The wall has two different constructional phases, the first phase pierced by arrow-slits and the second phase on the top of it. Looking from the inner side of the wall, the wall has lost a lot of its structural filling, to the extent that the backs of many of the outer facing stones are now visible, (**Fig. 38**). The wall should have had a thickness of 1.8 m, judging by the thickness of the northern upper corner of 15.0, but nowadays it measures only 48 cm, which is the depth of the first layer

existing in the section wall. Due to the change in the floor level, only the top of the arrow-slits are visible, which made measuring impossible.



Fig. 38-Northern façade of the wall 15.0.



Fig. 39-Northern façade of tower 14.

Between the two walls 13.0 and 15.0, a tower was built, a possible postern gate (space 14.0, **Fig. 39**) as already mentioned. The remains of blocked opening are still visible with a double arch inside the space. The right-hand impost stones of the gate's arch are still visible in the façade as bossed ashlars. Tracing the line of the arch shows that it would have had a pointed profile. The gate's impost span was 3.57 m, and the rise of the opening measures approximately 5 m. The analysis shows that the opening was blocked during medieval times in the early phases. The type of stones used for the blocking of this gate look similar to those from the second (red) construction phase. It is possible that after beginning construction of the gate and considering its position, the builders came to the realization that it was ineffective and not adequately secure. As a result, a duplicate of the gate 1.0 was created, (**Fig. 40** and **Fig. 41**). The tower base, dates from the first phase, and the linearity and the connection in the stones at the junction between the tower and the two adjacent walls make this hypothesis a sure fact. The last four rows of stones show again the Muslim characteristics of construction.



Fig. 40-Main entrance of the castle 1.0 from inside the castle's courtyard.



Fig. 41-Periodization of the main entrance space 1.0 of the castle.



Fig. 42-Guardian space next to the main entrance, space 20.0.

The north corner tower, 16.o, seems to have been extensively reconstructed or maybe even rebuilt using a medium size stone clearly regular. This type of masonry, visible on the northern and eastern face, (**Fig. 46** and **Fig. 47**), is clearly different from the previous phases of construction and belongs to the third phase of construction, like the south and east face of tower 2.o. From the interior, the space shows only one floor-level, covered by a pointed barrel-vault, (**Fig. 47**). Two similar arrow slits, 2 m high and 1.8 m deep, are located in the middle of the northern and eastern walls. At the north-western corner of the space there is a niche 16.o.3 visible in the wall measuring 2.19 m wide. Its original function is not obvious. This space has no trace of putlog holes or joist pockets, and its function is not known. The southern and western walls show traces of larger ashlar, which can be dated to the first phase of construction. The south-western corner of the tower is still visible in the open space 23.o.



Fig. 43-Northern façade of space 3.o.



Fig. 44-Northern façade, of space 3.o and 5.o.



Fig. 45-Junction between wall 15 and the tower 16 on the eastern façade of the castle enceinte.



Fig. 46-Eastern façade of tower 16.



Fig. 47-Inner view of space 16.o.

A pointed barrel-vault, 3.6 m deep, located in front of the doorway leading to the tower 16.o, represents addition to the existing wall 18.o, creating the space 17.o. There are

remains of rectangular holes on the eastern edge of the vault measuring 5 x 9 cm and 5 x 11 cm respectively and spaced 40 cm apart. At the southern edge of the space, the remaining half of an arrow-slit is still recognizable dating mostly from the first phase of construction.

18.o is a wall displaying almost all the periods of construction, (**Fig. 48**). The first phase, extending 9 m from north to south, is 2 m high and contains two arrow-slits resembling 2.o.3 and 2.o.4 in space 2.o, built 5.3 m apart (from each other's centre point). The remaining stretch of wall and the western façade of the tower 19.o, (**Fig. 49**), measuring 10.7 m long most probably date from the first phase of construction and have similar arrow-slits to those found in the spaces 8.o and 9.o. The whole stretch of the wall above the height of 2 m dates most probably from the third construction period. Canalization traces are visible in this same wall.

Tower 19.o, unlike all the other towers projects outside the enclosure. It is accessible through an irregular opening pierced in the enclosure wall. The inner space is a pointed barrel-vaulted room, (**Fig. 50**). The space has one arrow slit in the middle of the north wall, (**Fig. 51**), one in the middle of the east wall, (**Fig. 52**), and two in the south wall covering the main gate to the castle, (**Fig. 53** and **Fig. 54**). Particularly in this space, a small extension was created at the northern corner of the space. The construction of this small space blocked half of the arrow slit 18.o.3. This small annexe, lit by a small slit-window in the north wall, was a latrine, (**Fig. 53** and **Fig. 55**). The tower is a later insertion dating from the third construction phase. A wall jutting out from its south-western corner represents the enclosure wall that had to be cut in order to insert the tower.



Fig. 48-Inner view of wall 18.



Fig. 49-Western façade of space 19.o.



Fig. 50-Inner view of space 19.o.

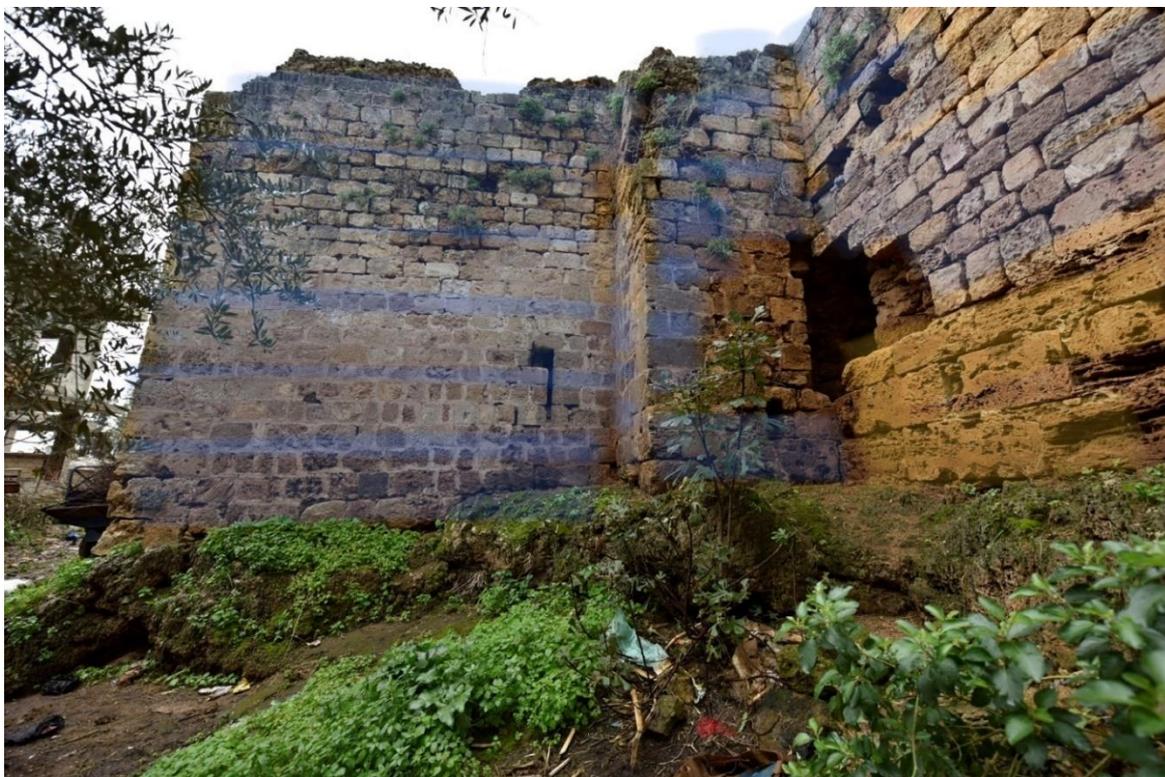


Fig. 51-Northern façade of tower 19 and the latrine turret.



Fig. 52-Eastern façade of Tower 19.



Fig. 53-Eastern face of wall 18 showing a shaft.



Fig. 54- Junction of wall 18 and tower 19 on the eastern façade of the enclosure.

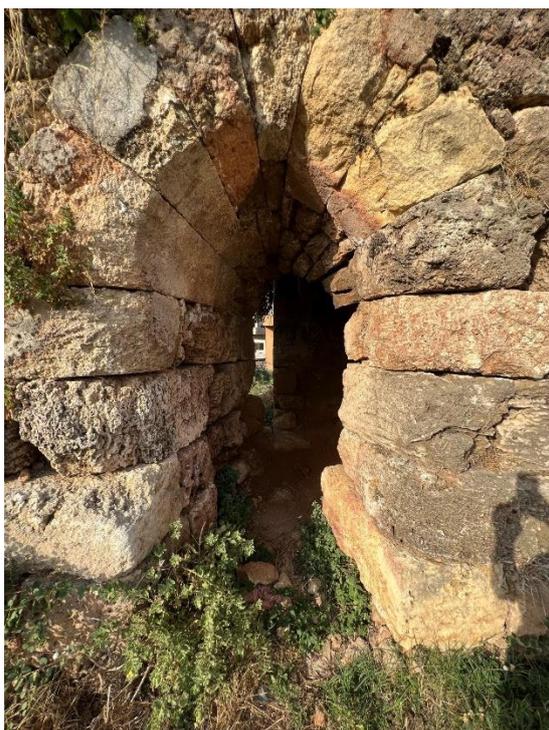


Fig. 55-Blocked arrow slit with the latrine turret in space 19.o.

The wall, in space 20.o, features an arrow-slit from the initial phase of construction. The main purpose of this arrow-slit was also to provide security to the main entrance. A staircase was built most probably in the second construction phase and at that time a small

room was created for the guardian of the gate under it. The eastern wall of the staircase was reconstructed during the third phase. The stairs leading to the defensive walls and towers can still be seen, but with a lot of missing steps. Going through the staircase to the upper level of the castle a remaining door trace was found on the edge of the space 3.1, (**Fig. 56** and **Fig. 57**). Could it be possible that this is the door of the missing chapel? The castle should have had a chapel and some scholars have suggested that it could have had been placed in the space 12.1.⁴¹² In this case, the chapel could have had been constructed above the space 3.1, from a much weaker material therefore it didn't survive, or more likely collapsed as in the case of Belvoir; or may also have been deliberately demolished, although at Crac and Marqab castles in Syria and elsewhere some chapels became mosques. The church should have been oriented east, like in the case of Belvoir castle where the Hospitallers designed the chapel to be in the entrance main tower determining the axis of the castle give a higher chance to suggest that the chapel was placed at the space 3.1.



Fig. 56-Traces of a door between the top of 3.0 and the main entrance.

⁴¹² Mesqui, 2014, p. 4



Fig. 57-Overview of the eastern wall of the castle.

The castle is articulated around a courtyard 22.0 with a cistern c1, (**Fig. 58**). The courtyard shows the remain of walls but cannot be dated without excavation. The space number 23.0, (**Fig. 59**), shows remain of walls that might have had been also a multifunctional space as well an encroaching on the northern façade 15.0. Nevertheless, it is not unlikely that, were an excavation to be conducted, the foundations of former vaulted spaces would be discovered on every side of the courtyard, thereby providing an alternative perspective on the nature of the space. However, if the courtyard at Qulay'āt castle's courtyard 22.0 did not originally feature the bordering vaulted halls, as seen in the 12th century enceinte of Crac des Chevaliers, it is also possible that wooden buildings, for instance on the inner side of the western wall (15.0), existed at some point. As in the 12th-century phase of the Crac des Chevaliers castle, there are a number of wooden structures in a similar position, for example on the façade that now overlooks the esplanade. Prior to the construction of the esplanade, there were undoubtedly a number of wooden constructions, in addition to staircases. (**Fig. 60**) Unfortunately, due to certain circumstances, the courtyard and rooms have been transformed into farmland and a barn, respectively.



Fig. 58-Overview of the courtyard of the castle.



Fig. 59-Western end of space 16.o.



Fig. 60- The façade that now overlook the esplanade in the Crac des Chevaliers castle.

6.2.2. Periodization of Qulay‘āt.

As mentioned above, Qulay‘āt castle was donated to the Hospitallers in the year 1127. Jean Richard expressed the opinion that a fortress was not required in this location and instead believed that the donation made was a monetary contribution to the Hospitallers.⁴¹³ Based on the available evidence, it can be concluded that the Hospitaller military domain in and around the plain of Buqay‘a was established in the year 1142. However, Qulay‘āt has most likely already been fortified by that time.

The different textures found in the castle make the possibility to divide the construction phases into three during the medieval time by the Hospitallers and the fourth construction phase was done by a Muslim group. The purpose behind the construction of this castle, was primarily to safeguard the southern borders of the Hospitaller Principality and to establish a relay point between Tripoli and the Crac des Chevaliers castle, enabling the knights of the Hospital to carry out their duties effectively.

⁴¹³ Richard J. , 1948, pp. 62-63

The considerable and obvious restoration or reconstruction work, which was particularly focused on the eastern front of the castle, can be easily recognized. A fortified place could have been important also for serving as a base from which to administer the agricultural estates in the area and serve as a safe place to gather the crops at harvest time, before sending them on their way to Tripoli or wherever else they were to be sold. In other words, the castle would also have had an economic function, which may also in part explain its layout. In some ways it is comparable to the Hospital's castle and estate at Bayt Jibrin, where Usama describes his participation in a Muslim raid from Ashkelon in which the corn gathered by the Franks was set on fire.⁴¹⁴ There are a couple of potential reasons why the reconstruction of it might have occurred, one of which being the ruin caused by Sultan al-ʿĀdil Sayf al-Dīn in 1207-1208, and the other being the considerable earthquake of 1202. It is most probable that after that the Hospitallers rebuilt the Eastern front of the castle. The possibility of the interior building's construction taking place during the Middle Ages cannot be ruled out.

Despite thorough research, no conclusive evidence has been found that can definitively attribute the time period of the Hospitallers' presence at the site, as opposed to the Muslims who regained control in 1266. It can be stated that the construction of the inner buildings spanned several years during which time the building programme underwent many changes. During space investigation, there will always be unknown areas waiting to be revealed, and the deeper one delves into comprehending space, the more interrogations arise.

6.2.3. 3D Periodization of Qulayʿāt.

In this particular case, the primary purpose of the 3D documentation was to demonstrate a new analytical process that can lead to a better understanding of the site and its different historical periods. To do this, the 3D documentation was used to create a visual representation that allowed for more detailed analysis of the site without being onsite. This made it possible to estimate the site's development more accurately and further information was also gathered which enlightened our interpretations. By using the 3D documentation, we were able to obtain an accurate visual representation of the physical site, which was

⁴¹⁴ Pringle D. , 2019, pp. 105-106

essential in our analytical process. This allowed us to access more detailed information that we otherwise would not have been able to access without being onsite. In practice, the 3D documentation proved to be of invaluable help in understanding the site's development and interpreting the data more meaningfully.

The assessment provides insights into the castle's initial architecture layout and design, as well as the changes that were made throughout the years. Furthermore, it serves as a useful resource for academics to compare with other castles and obtain fresh insights on the castle's role throughout the Middle Ages.

As part of the aim to interpret the results from the field survey work and find a new way to present these results, the idea was developed of using a 3D model that had been processed using the Agisoft Meshshaper software program itself in order to show the different chronologies of the site over the years. The resulting 3D model allows viewers to explore the site's development in a more interactive way, providing a more engaging experience. The 3D model also allows viewers to gain insight into the archaeology of the site, which would not be possible with traditional methods, (**Fig. 140, Fig. 141, Fig. 142, Fig. 143, Fig. 144, Fig. 145**).

Furthermore, it allows the results of the survey to be shared widely and used for educational purposes. Since the chosen program works with chunks, it was necessary to copy the model into several chunks.⁴¹⁵ The mesh model of each chunk was coloured differently based on the colour scheme applied to the chunk, the building phase. This allowed the viewer to identify the different parts of the model, as well as the different archaeological phases. It is significant to note that each and every chunk in this case represents a specific period of history, to better say a distinct chronological phase, (**Fig. 86**).

Having selected the different colours appropriate for the different periods and the different elements, like the surrounding area and trench around the castle, the analysis and categorization of elements to illustrate the various periods was carried out. At that point, chunks had to be shaped. Architectural elements not representative of the period had to be

⁴¹⁵ Chunks refer to individual sections of a project where data processing is applied. It is used to manage and process different sets of images or data separately within a single project. Each chunk typically contains a specific dataset, such as images captured, and undergoes processing steps like aligning photos, building meshes, and texturing, and in this case study different construction phases.

cut out, leaving only those representatives of the period. This was done in order to accurately represent the history of the castle and to ensure that the elements which are used to illustrate the various periods are accurate and true to the original structure.

By doing this, the survey results were easier to interpret. Furthermore, it enabled researchers to identify patterns in the data that were otherwise not visible. This provided a better understanding of the castle's construction and evolution over time in an easy and basic process. This was done by considering each chunk in the model as a construction layer. It also helped to identify areas for further research and analysis, as the castle is periodized in 3D not only in 2D. Ultimately, this survey also helps to preserve the castle's history for future generations, due to its detailed and accurate interpretation. **Fig. 86** illustrates the result of this three-dimensional periodization with the chunk of the original textured model being overlaid with the different mesh colours chunks at the lowest opacity in a single picture.

Therefore, it is understood that by reconstructing the castle in 3D, its original form will be accurately represented. The 3D model will be used to create a virtual tour of the castle, so people can explore it without having to be physically present at the location. Visitors will be able to learn more about the castle's history and appreciate its architecture from the comfort of their own homes. This will also help to preserve the castle for future generations, as the castle is endangered by modern interventions.

The reconstruction process of the castle was created on the Revit Autodesk program, which was done using the point clouds exported from the 3D model generated by Agisoft Metashape, (**Fig. 87**). As previously mentioned, Agisoft Metashape is a program that produces 3D models from photographs. Once the reconstruction was done on Revit Autodesk software, a 3D BIM model of the castle can be developed for various types of analysis and simulations.⁴¹⁶ A significant aspect that sets this model apart is its interactive nature and the fact that it can be modified with ease. This tool has a primary purpose, and in addition to that, it can also be used to create construction drawings, extending its functionality beyond just document creation.

⁴¹⁶ <https://www.autodesk.eu/products/revit/overview> (accessed August 2022).

6.2.4. Comparison points Qulay‘āt and Crac des Chevaliers.

In the twelfth century, during the early Hospitaller period, both the Crac des Chevaliers Castle and the Qulay‘āt Castle were constructed, and they share similar architectural features. Upon closer inspection of John Zimmer's ⁴¹⁷ reconstruction drawing of the Crac des Chevaliers Castle and the aerial photo of Qulay‘āt Castle taken from the northern corner in January 2020, it becomes evident that there are points of similarity between the two. The plan displays a type of castle with a big courtyard, surrounded by multifunctional vaulted rooms and secured by square towers hardly jutting out from the line of the enclosure to provide flanking fire on the corners and on the middle sections of the walls. This bears resemblance to several early fortified castles built by military order during the 12th century.

The first enclosure of the Crac des Chevaliers castle is a fascinating structure that has been virtually reconstructed by Biller,⁴¹⁸ Zimmer⁴¹⁹ and Mesqui.⁴²⁰ All reconstructions identify the primitive enclosure, which was built after the earthquake of 1170. Rectangular towers some with open back towards the vaulted rooms flank these towers. Additionally, the towers are slightly jutting out of the enclosure, which adds to the castle's impressive appearance. Just like the rectangular flanking towers present at Qulay‘āt castle, there are similar towers at this location.

⁴¹⁷ Zimmer, 2011

⁴¹⁸ Biller, 2006

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid*

⁴²⁰ Mesqui, 2018

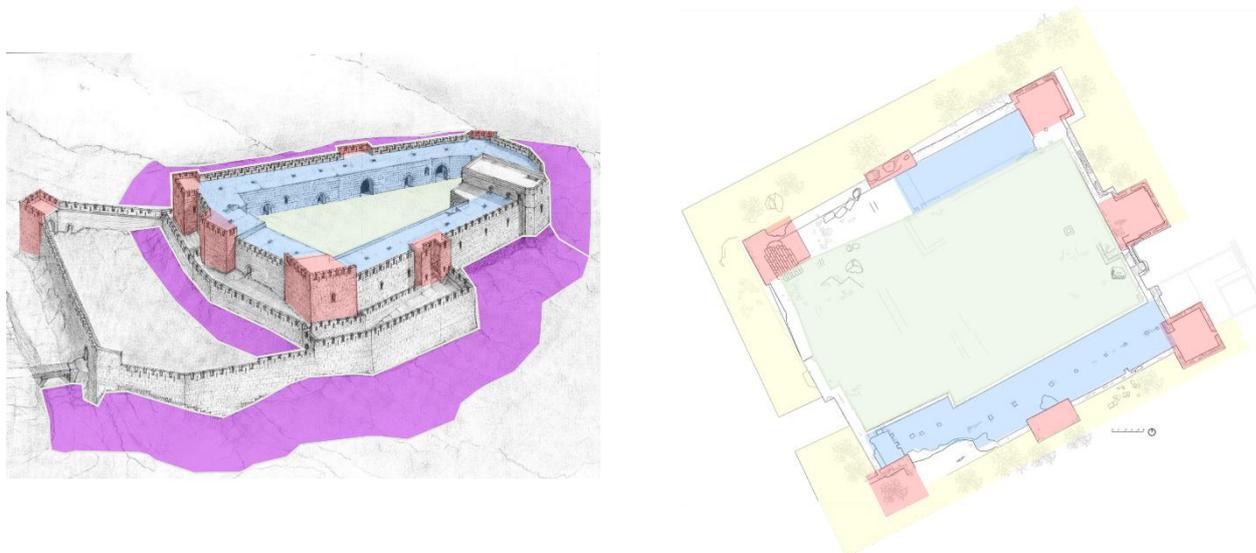


Fig. 61-Examples showing some of the similarities and differences between the two castles the left showing the Crac des Chevaliers based on the reconstruction of John Zimmer and the right.

The castles were designed in such a way that they used large multifunctional barrel-vaulted spaces that were located along the wall, which was demarcated in a blue colour (**Fig. 61**). These spaces surrounded a large courtyard that was defined by a green colour. For practical purposes, such as lighting and ventilation, several openings were built inside these vaulted rooms. The rooms in question were quite interesting in that they featured a wooden floor that divided the space for either living or storage purposes. This unique characteristic was easily identifiable due to the presence of joist pockets that were aligned at the same level on the walls, with measurements that were equal in size. The two castles flanked the enclosure by square towers shown in red; the donjon was being built having two levels.

The bossed ashlar, measuring 50 to 60 cm in height, can be observed on the exterior façades of both cases. Additionally, it should be noted that the two cases also share the presence of normal rectangular-based arrow slits. By examining the castles in detail, one can find several similarities and differences between them. For instance, the rocky base slope in the Crac des Chevaliers (shown in purple) is different from the rock cut in the Qulay'āt Castle (coloured in yellow). The Crac des Chevaliers Castle occupied a highly strategic spur; therefore, it was developed, and many modifications and changes were executed. Qulay'āt Castle, was sited on a ridge and did receive some enlargement to certain part of its early plan, but did seem to have lost its otherwise lesser military role at an earlier period and was

used by the villagers for agriculture and to keep various kinds of animals for gardening and harvesting.



Fig. 62-Northern face of tower 4 showing Medieval assembly Marks.

The medieval masonry marks proved to be helpful during the survey of the two castles as they provided valuable insights into the different periods of construction. The quantity of masonry marks present in the Crac des Chevaliers is significantly greater than what is found in Qulay‘āt castle indicating the presence of a larger number of professional masons working there. By comparing the case of Qulay‘āt, the marks in Crac des Chevaliers were much more widespread and visible throughout the castle. In contrast to this, only a few marks were discovered on the northern façade of tower 4.0 in the area where the roof had collapsed, (Fig. 62).

6.3. Lesser Rural Centres.

The Franks had a greater emphasis on the countryside, which is reflected in both the sources and the buildings. Most of the surviving Crusader remains in the countryside are small fortifications or fortified settlements. They were often used as agricultural and administrative centres, such as Felicium castle⁴²¹ (identified as Menjez castle) or Malachīn ⁴²² (present-day Qal'at al-Burj). Malachīn is mentioned in a charter of 1181, which records the donation of a large area of land at the eastern end of the county by Raymond III of Tripoli. The castellum Malachīn is located in the centre of the Wādī Khālid region to the east of the Menjez. Situated on a very high and steep rocky hill, the Castellum Malachīn, also known as Qal'at al-Burj in Arabic, occupies a strategic and remarkable defensive position. (**Map 3**) The castle is smaller than Felicium Castle and has never been documented by anyone, but due to the insecurity of the area, the castle has not been visited for documentation. It was built of limestone and show the foundations of a church with a single nave ending in a semicircular apse. In addition, its exterior was faced with basalt. There is no doubt that the remains are mostly Frankish. ⁴²³

Almost all of these small fortifications or fortified settlements could be taken as possible indicators of the presence of at least one small village or hamlet nearby, given the parallels in Palestine and Syria. ⁴²⁴ These fortifications could be a series of fortified settlements such as Menjez, with a smaller fortified corner guarding the only access to the village, or rural towers or even courtyard houses. The fortified caves, which are very characteristic of this mountainous limestone region of the Levant, could have been either fortified outposts with a permanent garrison, such as in the Bekka Valley of Dayr Mār Mārūn, or as refuge caves constructed by a number of villages and possibly only used in case of danger.

⁴²¹ RRH no.212

⁴²² RRH no.602

⁴²³ RRH, n.602; Richard J. , 1948, p. 54; Mourany, 2006, pp. 82-83; www.orient-latine.com

⁴²⁴ Pringle D. , 1986a; Kennedy, 1994; Major B. , 2015

6.3.1. Case Study 2. - Felicium / Menjez.

6.3.1.1. Historical background.

Menjez site is one of the best-preserved early Crusader fortified rural sites studied recently, where, besides the geography, the settlement was protected by a small, fortified strongpoint too.

The village of Menjez, is situated in the 'Akkār district of Northern Lebanon, and is known for its beautiful location between two river ravines that have provided natural protection to the many civilizations that have lived in the area over the years. The area boasts of a historical significance with 180 pre-historic megalith tombs dating back to 5,000 years before Christ, a remarkably well-preserved Roman temple known as Maqām al-Rabb (**Fig. 154**), that dates back to the first century,⁴²⁵ and a medieval site referred to as *Felicium* in the Crusader documents.

Menjez Castle, positioned in the gap of Homs and overlooking the river Nahr al-Kabīr al-Janūbī, which now serves as the border between Lebanon and Syria. The Castle of Menjez, known as *Felicium* in medieval times or Qal'at al-Falīz in Arabic, is a fortified site that dates back to the studied era. The name of Qal'at al-Falīz, which is not Semitic, is thought to have originated from the Latin name of the site, which was “*Castellum Felicium*”.⁴²⁶ Felicium is one of the few unaltered early medieval castles, where the development of the early fortifications in the region can be studied. Menjez Castle's construction material is a basalt stone, which is found in great abundance in the region where the castle is situated.

The total area that it occupies is 11200 m² and it is divided into two distinct and easily recognizable parts. The smaller part is the “castle” covering 2200 m² at the eastern end of the site. (**Fig. 63**) Positioned to the east is a considerable rock-cut ditch that effectively separates it from the rest of the plateau, and this combined with the main rampart served as the primary defence against any potential sieges directed towards the site. Many parts of the site have been destroyed, yet many remains of buildings are still discernible, and once the site has been cleaned and excavated, there will be enough parts buried under the earth to

⁴²⁵ Taylor, 1967, p. 15; Aliquot, 2009, p. 247

⁴²⁶ *Cartulaire I, no. 144*; Major B., 2015, p. 9

make a complete topographical study possible. The archaeological mission, which was a collaboration between the Holy spirit university USEK and Pázmány Péter Catholic University, began conducting fieldwork in 2018 on a site that had not been studied before.⁴²⁷

Due to the scarcity of historical sources, there is a limited amount of information available regarding the fortified site of Menjez. Based on the archaeological surface finds that have been discovered, it is evident that the spur has been continuously inhabited since the Roman period or earlier. Given the large quantity of well-crafted *Terra Sigillata* pottery discovered, it is likely that the area was likely home to a significant habitation, and the discovery of an olive press supports the possibility of a villa or similar structure being present. Besides the remains of a press found in the *rabad*, and after taking into account the area's characteristics, it could have been producing both oil and wine.⁴²⁸

The potential of this place is huge, as it could have easily served as the main agricultural centre for the nearby fields. The presence of habitation in the area is supported by the information shared by the locals, who reported the finding of a graveyard from the Roman period on the plateau located towards the East of the site. Because of the strategic location and constant battles between the Fatimids in Tripoli, the Byzantines in the Syrian coast, and the tribal forces of northern Syria, it would have been reasonable to expect the site to have been fortified in the 11th century. However, there is limited information available from this period regarding the establishment and frequent sieges of the nearby 'Akkār al-'Atīqā castle.⁴²⁹

At the very beginning of the 12th century, the Crusaders arrived in the region. It took several years of raids and minor clashes in the region, but the army was finally able to capture the city of Tripoli in 1109. This success put increased pressure on the Atabeg of Damascus, as already mentioned before, who eventually handed over Ḥiṣn 'Akkār to Tancred, the lord of Antioch.⁴³⁰ The northern half of the Gap of Homs and the Buḡay'a came to be occupied by the Antiochenes, which helped them to strengthen their control over the region. Consequently, in 1114, Tancred decided to donate the entire region to Pons, the count of

⁴²⁷ Major & Kahwaji, 2022, pp. 295- 320

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.* p.320

⁴²⁹ Ibn Shaddād, *Ta'rikh Lubnān*, 113.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.* p. 114.

Tripoli.⁴³¹ On the 8th of February in the year 1127, Pons and his wife Cecilia issued a charter that listed the considerable donations made by the count to the Hospitallers, which included a house at *Felicium*.⁴³²

In 1137, the Damascene emir Baswāj launched an invasion that led to the complete destruction of multiple areas in the central part of Tripoli. Additionally, the invasion resulted in the total destruction of Tripoli's army and the death of the count.⁴³³ Even though Felicium is not explicitly referred to, it is possible that this raid might have affected it. The new count Raymond II recognized the need to protect the northeastern borders of the county following the destruction and thus, he donated large, landed properties and their fortifications to the Order of St John. An interesting piece of information can be found in the donation charter of 1142. Specifically, it mentions the *castellum of Felitum*.

However, before the castellum could be obtained, it was necessary to purchase it from its lay lord *Gislebertus de Podio Laurentii* and his wife *Dagolth* for a total of 1000 bezants.⁴³⁴ As a result of this transfer, the ownership of the site of Felicium was no longer in the hands of the Puylaurent family, but it became part of the estate of the Hospitallers, who were not only the new rulers of the region but also one of the largest international organizations in medieval Europe. Despite the fact that Menjez/Felicium is only referred to twice in medieval texts, certainly the occurrences that took place during the 12th and 13th centuries had a significant influence on the locals.

In view of the intentional neglect displayed by the Mamluks towards the Levantine coastlands during the beginning of their reign, it is highly probable that they did not use the smaller and less fortified site of Felicium as a castle any longer.⁴³⁵ Moreover, due to the absence of discernible and well-dated archaeological material on the surface, it is quite likely that the area remained uninhabited for an extended period. As a result, it can be inferred that it was the Christian villagers in the area who most likely acquired this centre or its *rabad*, and this has likely remained unchanged since the Middle Ages.

⁴³¹ Major B. , 2015, p. 31

⁴³² *Cartulaire* no. 82; *RRH* no. 118.

⁴³³ Ibn al-Qalānisi. *Dzayl*, 258, 262; transl. 244 being two descriptions of the same raid; William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, XIV, xxiii, 661-662; transl. II/82.

⁴³⁴ *Cartulaire* no. 144; *RRH* no. 212.

⁴³⁵ Major B. , 2015, pp. 39-41

6.3.1.2. Description and interpretation of Menjez Castle.

The present structures that remain above ground serve as a useful tool in detecting the two main areas of the site - namely, the citadel and a fortified suburb located to the West of it. In terms of its structure, the small castle comprised an enclosure wall and multiple small rooms, with the possibility of some having barrel-vaults as covering, while most were more likely covered with a flat wooden roof.

In the vicinity, there was only one room where the function could be identified. It was the rectangular room that served as stables for a few horses near the former eastern gate, (**Fig. 91**). Located outside the walls of the castle at the southwestern corner stood, a single-nave church. When it came to approaching the castle, the eastern end was the most optimal option for any intending attackers, especially if using siege engines, and the main lines of defence were the castle and its great eastern trench. A rock-cut ditch separates the castle from the suburb on its western side. The larger portion of the site, which covers an area of 9,000 m², is located in the suburb. Upon careful observation, it appears that no walls have survived in the suburb. Despite its size, the medieval castle in Felicium has an intriguing design that is worth taking a look at.

Due to the limited visibility of the scanty remains and the majority of it being buried, it is difficult to conduct a detailed analysis of the medieval structures and their respective functions. Further excavation work would be necessary to gain a comprehensive understanding of the individual elements and spaces. The author drew the first plan during the Lebanese-Hungarian mission in 2018, and it was the initial plan. Based on the aerial and ground surveying that was conducted, the plan was created to decode the general outline and shape of the site. Balázs Major, in his article, in collaboration with Hany Kahwaji Janho elaborates on the castle's structure, stating that it comprises three primary bailey areas, including the inner castle (B1), (**Fig. 92**), which is enclosed by the southern (B2) (**Fig. 95**) and (**Fig. 96**), and the northern (B3) baileys, (**Fig. 97**) the different Gates and circulation system in the castle.⁴³⁶ Previously the site has been described in a few lines by Paul Deschamps with

⁴³⁶ Major & Kahwaji, 2022, pp. 295- 320

two photographs⁴³⁷ and approximately the same quantity of information is given by Levon Nordiguian.⁴³⁸

Even though Felicium's castle is small, it exhibits several parts that clearly indicate different construction phases or periods. The identification of evidence that confirms a different construction period or just an individual phase in the construction is a task that requires great effort. The area just west of the stable has revealed a Roman period "podium wall", (**Fig. 89**) and (**Fig. 90**), that had been utilized as a substructure for not one, but two distinct periods of medieval walls that were constructed above it. Positioned between the inner enclosure of the castle and the church Ch1 was the second gate G2, which marked the western end of the southern bailey. The church's initial design incorporated a single nave and a semicircular apse. Because the church was situated on a hill overlooking the valley, it is believed that the artisans who constructed it may have carved a western doorway into the bedrock alongside the southern wall.

Regarding the structure, it becomes apparent that the chapel building formed an integral part of the outer perimeter defences of the castle. The structure was built by Crusaders and has arched recesses in its side. Furthermore, its placement indicates that it was constructed during the Crusader period. One point along the southwestern corner of the church boasts a well-preserved medieval wall that extends for an impressive 13 m in length and reaches a height of 2 m. It is possible that the wall in question served a dual purpose, acting as both a fortification for the outer defences of the castle and as a protective barrier for certain areas of the suburb.

Considering the large number of ancient basalt structural remains present in Menjez, it can be strongly hypothesized that this high place, located on a strategic spur above the river, must have attracted and been utilized by people in previous eras. The area has a pre-medieval history which is evident not only by the presence of numerous Romano-Byzantine pottery scattered around but also by the foundation of several buildings constructed using enormous ashlar blocks. Generally speaking, it can be said that the lengthy elevation did not serve as a defensive line and instead depended mainly on the steep sides of the ravines to the north and south, leaving little to be interpreted in terms of fortification. Apart from some

⁴³⁷ Deschamps P. , 1973, pp. 16-17

⁴³⁸ Nordiguian & Voisin, 1999, p. 89

enclosure walls that are infrequently pieced by arrow slits, there are no signs of any other defensive features on the highest and eastern parts of the elevation, (Fig. 98).

Taking into account the above-mentioned points and the surfaces that were analysed, it can be concluded that *Felicium* was a relatively unimportant rural site for the Puylaurent family. However, this changed to some extent when the Hospitallers took over the site in 1142. Some of the apparently different style buildings were likely to have been constructed then. The walls of the structure were mainly constructed using a combination of stone spolia and basic fieldstones or roughly cut stones.

The inhabitants were likely able to exploit two areas as the narrow edge and steep sides did not provide ample opportunities for agricultural activity. In the field situated to the east and directly across from the castle, fisheries and mills were established to support the local economy.⁴³⁹ The castle served as a protective barrier between the suburban area and the neighbouring countryside, providing a secure environment for the workers. It is beyond doubt that the Menjez spurs located beside the Nahr al-Kabīr have been a site of strategic importance from the earliest times. Additionally, there is also a possibility of religious significance as gravestones were found by the monks of a nearby Maronite monastery on the plateau.⁴⁴⁰

The huge wall constructed of neatly cut bossed ashlar that can be found under the southern part of the castle area was previously mentioned to be the podium of a Roman-period building. Based on the amount of scattered medieval pottery found on the site as well as the remains of medieval walls, which were likely used as houses, it can be inferred that the temple in question was smaller than the nearby Maqām al-Rabb. The mission's report hypothesized that the cycloptic stone construction situated on the eastern end of the castle hill might have been used by the Romans as an ancient religious centre.

In the suburb area, several houses received recognition. H1 measuring 7.30 x 9.65m, H2 measuring 7.8 x 6.5m divided in two with a division wall of around 1 meter wide, and H3 measuring 10.8 x 12m also divided by a division wall forming two rooms of 3.6 x 12m

⁴³⁹ Major & Kahwaji, 2022, p. 303

⁴⁴⁰ The plateau to the east of the fortified site is said to have given place to an antique cemetery from which the Greek-inscribed tombstones preserved in the Our Lady of the Citadel Monastery were collected. *Ibid* p.296

and the second 4.4 x 12m, were also built on the plateau of the spur to the west of the current castle site during the Roman period. The Byzantine period was marked by significant changes made to house H1, which resulted in its conversion into a church. The changes included the addition of an apse and a sacristy room.

The aforementioned church was most likely constructed to accommodate the individuals residing in the castle, whereas this structure of late-antique origin may have been intended to serve the suburban community. Despite its earlier status being unclear, the outpost was definitely fortified by the end of the 10th century, probably as a result of the Byzantine reconquest of Fatimid territories. Protected by a small castle, the agricultural settlement was situated on its eastern edge.

Despite its occupation by the Hospitallers, it does not appear that there was any significant development at that time. Felicium, despite its fortifications, had the appearance of an agricultural centre. In addition, it is interesting to note that the *sgraffito* ware, which was highly developed and dates to the 13th century, is not present among the archaeological finds of a rather simple nature.

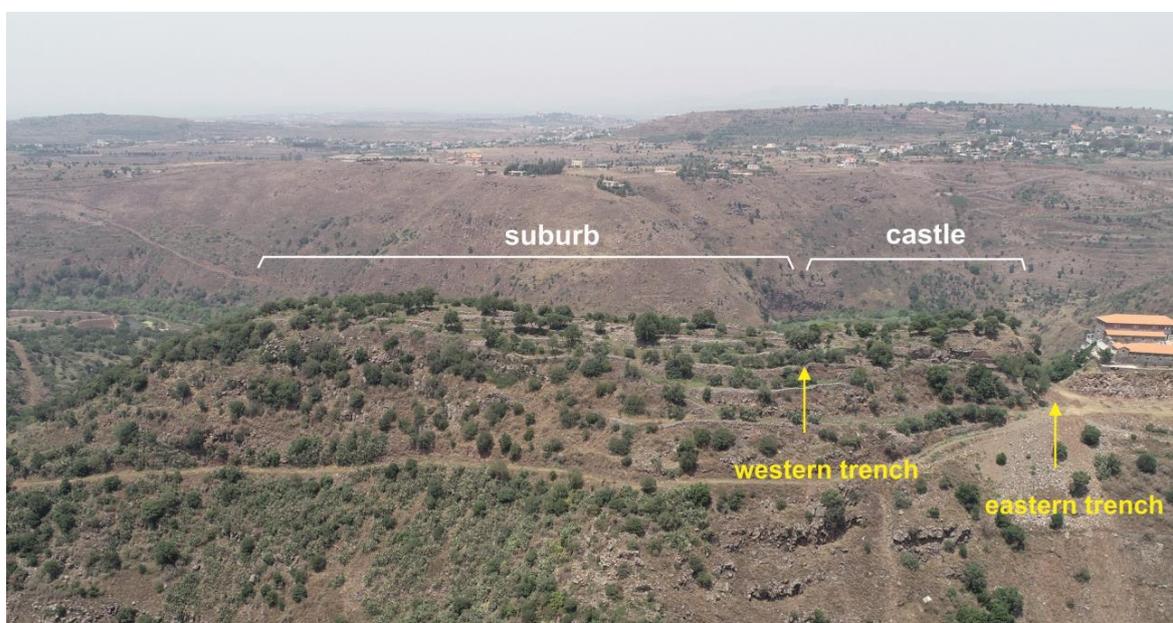


Fig. 63-Picture of Menjez Castle, showing the two parts of the castle. (Photo B. Takáts).

The settlements described in this chapter represent a group of fortifications. They are remarkable not only for their unique form and function, but also for their strategic placement in fertile regions previously without fortifications. It is clear that the purpose of these fortifications was various. Fortified sites such as Qulay‘āt fulfilled the role of military barracks and an administrative hub. Conversely, smaller rural centres like Menjez castle served as both protection and agricultural centres. As a result, regardless of the site’s size, the fortification indicates a rural settlement. The characteristics of a rural castle include a mixture of defensive and residential functions, which distinguishes them from traditional defensive castles. Rural castles provide protection against enemies with reduced forces, while also serving as administrative centre, collection point of the taxes, and agricultural productivity.

7. THE RURAL TOWERS AND THE COURTYARD HOUSES.

The strategic importance of rural towers becomes apparent in the medieval Crusader landscape of regions such as Palestine and the Syrian coast. These structures fulfilled a wide range of functions, beyond just defence, and had a significant impact on the geopolitical and administrative landscape of that period.

The role of late antique military architecture in the design of Crusader fortifications, particularly the construction of towers, has tended to be emphasised in previous research,⁴⁴¹ but had no foundation. The origins of towers in the Crusader period and late antique military architecture have been the subject of a re-evaluation.⁴⁴² Towers near the Syrian coast was predominantly monastic,⁴⁴³ with well-cut ashlars and few openings, sometimes being of later medieval insertions. Further inland, near the Syrian desert, towers tended to be defensive of nature.⁴⁴⁴

Crusaders, influenced by feudalism, focused on developing rural infrastructure, which led to an increase in rural towers in areas like Palestine and coastal Syria in twelfth and thirteenth centuries. These towers served a variety of functions, from residences to administrative centres. They were initially built by minor vassals but were later taken over by institutions such as the military orders due to economic difficulties and security threats. Overall, the feudal context and strategic considerations of the Crusaders played a major role in shaping the distribution and function of towers in the region.

The structures functioned as both observation points and communication hubs, employing signals such as fire and smoke to provide advance notice of possible raids or threats. The purpose behind the construction of these buildings, which include small towers and vaulted structures, was to serve as administrative centres and residences in rural regions. These fortifications were of modest proportions, often consisting of a single tower only, but sometimes it was also surrounded by a rectangular enclosure with vaults on its interior.

⁴⁴¹ Deschamps P. , 1934, pp. 41-57

⁴⁴² Pringle D. , 1994, pp. 335-336

⁴⁴³ Peña, Castellana, & Fernández, 1980, pp. 47-58

⁴⁴⁴ Butler, 1907-20, pp. 8-23,65-71,74-75,83-84,100-104; Mouterde & Poidebard, 1945

The rural towers discovered in the Crusader countryside stand as quiet evidence of a violent era, in which the need for strategic defensive structures arose in response to geopolitical challenges. By serving as administrative focal points, defensive bastions, or coastal sentinels, these towers exerted a significant influence on the Crusader presence in the Levant.

An increase in settlements has been reported for the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries in the 'Akkār plains.⁴⁴⁵ The sources mention that Europeans were settling in safe zones in great numbers in Palestine.⁴⁴⁶ In the north of Lebanon, many medieval charters also attest the presence of European civilians in considerable numbers. Field surveys have not identified beyond doubt such sites on the Syrian and Lebanese coasts; only a handful of tentative indications exist in this regard.⁴⁴⁷

The feudal system introduced by the Franks resulted in the appearance of a new category of buildings in the Levant, the rural towers, or little donjons. This indicates a direct European presence, and several of them were found and assessed in the Kingdom of Jerusalem.⁴⁴⁸ A considerable number have also been found and documented in the Syrian coastal region,⁴⁴⁹ with most of the examples reported from the northern part of the 'Akkār plains. This makes it evident that such structures are to be expected on the southern side of the plain as well as on the hills bordering it.

Hitherto, five towers between the Nahr al-Kabīr al-Janūbī and the Nahr al-Jawz have been located. Most of them still have considerable remains standing, including Bḥannīn tower, located on the southern fringes of the Gap of Homs,⁴⁵⁰ “*villa, quaedicitur Bahani*” mentioned by a charter in 1127.⁴⁵¹ Bḥannīn tower and Tībū tower, were built by Frankish individuals in the centre of their estates.

To the north of Batrūn, the so-called Burj al-Sil‘ā the ‘tower of fire’ was described in 1932 by the Hachette World Guides,⁴⁵² as a signalling tower, has since disappeared. ‘*sur*

⁴⁴⁵ Bartl, 1999, pp. 29-33

⁴⁴⁶ Pringle D. , 1982, p. 15

⁴⁴⁷ Major B. , 2015, pp. 68-88

⁴⁴⁸ Pringle D. , 1994, pp. 335-350

⁴⁴⁹ Major B. , 2015, pp. 68-88

⁴⁵⁰ Chaaya A. , 2005-2006, pp. 231-243.

⁴⁵¹ *RRH*, no. 118.

⁴⁵² Boulanger, 1955, pp. 122-123

les rochers du bord de la mer, subsistent les ruines d'une ancienne tour de garde, Bordj Es Selaa, "le tour du feu", souvenir des signaux à flamme'.⁴⁵³ The tower was also located on the map of Paul Deschamps.

Burj al-‘Ayn, and Burj Dayr Ḥillā, located near to the al-Bārid river were mentioned by Chaaya.⁴⁵⁴ No remains were found at the site of Burj al-‘Ayn, probably due to recent construction in the area, in contrast to the case of Burj Dayr Ḥillā’s, location was described by Dr Anis Chaaya in his dissertation as a tower on a hilltop located in the first foothills of Mount Lebanon.⁴⁵⁵ It is located in the valley of Nahr al-Bārid upstream and almost 3km to the east of the Bḥannān tower. The only thing that remains recognizable from Burj al-‘Ayn, is the foundation of two walls. According to the testimonies of the people living in the area, it has been mentioned that the tower was constructed with two levels, consisting of a ground floor and a first floor. The architecture of this tower is difficult to interpret because nothing remains of its elevation. By looking at the Google Earth map and comparing the area over the past few years, the remains of the tower were found. (Map 7, Map 8, Map 9, Map 10)

The few towers that were built, either by the ruling powers or by the local population, all have one thing in common: they were primarily military, designed to serve as lookouts or shelters/refuge. This is certainly the case with the two towers that are said to have been passed by the army of the First Crusade on the Lebanese coast, not located in the studied region. Described by Albert of Aachen,⁴⁵⁶ the first was somewhere near Ras al-Shaqqa, south of Tripoli, and was a structure "projecting over a certain gate, ... built across the road, and in its living space six men *could be stationed, whose defence could deny the road to all who lived under the heavens.*"⁴⁵⁷ The second tower, a defile in the Nahr al-Kalb area near Beirut, was also built with the intention of blocking the road.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵³ Monmarché, 1932, p. 52

⁴⁵⁴ Burj Dayr Ḥilla located next to the al-Bared River and Burj Ain al-Kal‘a were mentioned in the Chaaya A., 2005-2006, pp. 231-243

⁴⁵⁵ Dr. Anis Chaaya provided one page of his dissertation done in 2010 p. 279

⁴⁵⁶ Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, 388-389; transl. 390-391.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid*

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid*

7.1. Case study 3. - Tībū tower.

“*Tībū and its districts*” was mentioned in the treaty of 1282,⁴⁵⁹ as the feudal centre for the local lord. The remains of a tower and an extensive adjacent settlement are located on a strategic hill, at the meeting point between Wādī Qubayāt and Nahr Uṣṭūwān near the southern border of the Gap of Homs. At the bottom of the hill, a spring called ‘Ayn Tībū is still flowing, which was named after the tower, Burj ‘Ayn Tībū. The remains of the tower are at the highest point of the hill, (Fig. 99), surrounded by the remains of around thirty-five houses, most of which probably date to the Roman period. This is once again attested by the large amount of *terra sigillata*, the remains of an olive-press, and several basalt millstones. The apparently single tower structure was positioned on top of the hill above the houses of the settlement (Fig. 100).

The tower's construction can be deduced from the only façade that remains at the base of one of the walls. This indicates that the tower was built using small cubic basalt stones, possibly with larger stones used at the quoins. Evidence for this comes from a few larger stones that have been carefully shaped with a bossed facing on two adjoining sides. When considering the suggested gathering, it is difficult not to draw a parallel with Burj Zāra, which is situated just a few kilometres to the north in the Syrian coast. This is also faced using small cubic basalt blocks, while the quoins are made of much larger limestone.

With a rectangular shape, the tower measures about 12.40 x 19m in size. It is not uncommon to see similar situations in many sites within the region, where the interior and exterior facings have been stripped off, leaving behind a core consisting of small rubble stones set in cement or mortar typical of the Frankish period. The thicknesses of the walls are not consistent, with the two remaining walls being different in thickness. The western wall's measurements have been recorded, with the base measuring 2 m in width and 1.40m in height, with the unfaced rubble core, 1.60m wide, adding a further 2m to its height. However, when it comes to the northern wall, things are different as its base exceeds 2.40 m in thickness and its surviving height is 1.40m.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibn ‘Abdazzāhir, *Tashrīf* = Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn ‘Abdazzāhir, *Tashrīf al-ayyām wa’l-uṣūr fī sīrat al-Malik al-Manṣūr*. ed. Murād Kāmil. A-83, 1961, pp.21-22.

By taking into account these dimensions and by making a comparison with the study that was done on the towers located on the Syrian coast,⁴⁶⁰ it can be inferred that the tower in question could have had a ground floor that was covered with a barrel vault. Due to the wall thickness being greater than 2.40 m, it is possible that the tower also had a first floor which might have been covered by a cross vault. Given the thickness of the wall, it is also plausible that a staircase could have been integrated within the thickness of the tower's wall. Based on archaeological evidence, it seems highly likely that an entrance to the building was located on the ground floor. This idea is supported by the presence of 2.70m wide opening, at ground floor level and what could be a part of a door on the top of the eastern corner of the remaining northern wall, showing a depth of 1.40m under the ground level. With this it would be possible to get more information about the tower architecture by excavating the site.

To the northeast of the tower are the remains of houses within a radius of 104m of the tower wall, and the ground around about littered with an extensive collection of pottery in large quantity as already mentioned. The fact that the pottery present within a radius of 45m of the tower wall dates from the Crusader period suggests that the houses within this boundary were reused during the Middle Ages. In (**Fig. 64**) the houses coloured with blue are those that were reused during the medieval period and the red are those that date from the Roman period. The area covered by the houses is approximately 22310 sqm and contains a total of approximately 35 houses, 21 of which were reused during the medieval period, covering an area of 13630sqm. There were two types of reused houses, one type measuring between 12 x 7m and 20 x 7m and consisting of one space and the other type measuring between 14 x 6m and 21 x 9m and consisting of 2 sub-spaces. The wall thickness of the houses varies between 1 and 2 metres.

The tower, despite its critical significance and vulnerability to illegal excavations, had never been officially documented or surveyed. No drawings have been found to provide information on the tower's layout or shape and it appears that until now no scholars have shown any interest in properly documenting the site. To ensure a comprehensive

⁴⁶⁰ Major B. , 2015, pp. 70-88

architectural survey, the tower was accurately modelled in 3D using the photogrammetry method.

During the summer of 2019, specifically in July, the 3D documentation process for the tower and the surroundings was successfully concluded. Using a "traveler drone" at an altitude of 10 m, approximately 490 pictures were taken to create the shell of the entire hill. In order to cover the entire surface of the hill completely, it was necessary to fly for a duration of two hours. Since there are no newly built houses or trees on the hill, the ideal time for flying and for the best lighting conditions was in the early morning. As previously indicated in the Methodology chapter, the examination of numerous case studies has been carried out in accordance with the SfM methodology, (**Fig. 159**) and (**Fig. 160**).

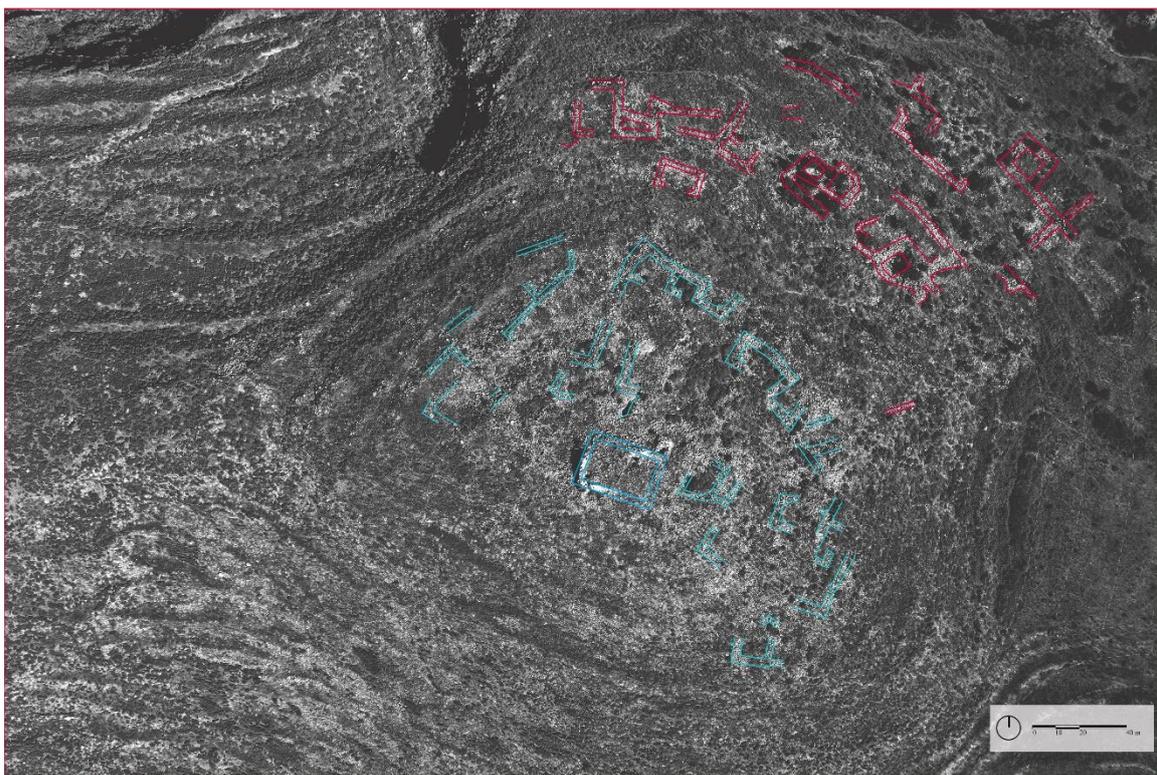


Fig. 64-Orthophoto showing the remains of the tower and the surrounding houses.

7.3. Case study 4. - Dayr Ḥillā Courtyard House.

It is possible that in rural areas, non- or semi-fortified vaulted structures played a role comparable to that of the tower sites, with a greater focus on their function as residences and repositories. Despite the numerous depictions of these formations in Palestine, the Syrian coastal area only exhibits a restricted number of recognizable remnants.⁴⁶¹

The ʿAkkār Plains and the coastal region in Lebanon are highly fertile which suggests that there were multiple residential towers and perhaps even courtyard houses present in the northern part of the country, similar to what was found in Syrian and Palestinian regions.⁴⁶² Dayr Ḥillā, the recently discovered courtyard house, lies between Nahr Abū ʿAlī and Nahr al-Bārid, and its discovery raises hopes for the discovery of other unexplored remains similar to it. The structure in question seems to have consisted of two adjacent rectangular rooms, each with their own unique dimensions.

When we examine the courtyard House of Dayr Ḥillā, we can observe that the first room has dimensions of 8.11 x 4.64m, and the second room is slightly smaller, measuring 7.60 x 4.64m. Both rooms were covered by a pointed barrel vault. Inside the vault, there is an opening that most likely leads to the cistern under the room, and it can be found adjacent to the entrance, (**Fig. 120**). There is a possibility that the building had a first floor that is not known to us in addition to, the ground floor that survives. The two small windows that provide ventilation for the two rooms have been preserved and can be found at either end of the rectangular building, one located in the western end and the other in the eastern end. Above the large doorway opening, on the northern façade of the ground floor (**Fig. 122**), there was a larger window, (**Fig. 121**). This provides an additional possibility that there might be a wooden mezzanine floor inside, dividing the relatively high interior into two floors. The Crusader origin of the site is clearly indicated by the general shape and intended purpose of the construction, as well as by the bossed ashlar forming the quoins.⁴⁶³ There may have been other structures such as a courtyard in front of the building, east front, but this may

⁴⁶¹ Pringle R. , 1997a, pp. 11-13; Major B. , 2015, pp. 89-95

⁴⁶² Major B. , 2015; Pringle D. , 1997a, pp. 11-13

⁴⁶³ The existence of a Crusader site here and in nearby regions was already indicated by the late Prof Anis Chaaya, like in the case of Burj Dayr Ḥillā which should be located nearby the courtyard house. I am greatly indebted to Dr Hany Kahwaji Janho for having taken us to the site.

have been destroyed by the road, and the high landfill behind the ruins, west front, may also hide other structures.

The site's documentation was limited to the first visit due to the challenges of accessing it and the shortage of time available. The dataset consists of 200 pictures captured and only a few dimensions were taken for scaling. As already mentioned, the courtyard house was located in an area with dense vegetation, therefore it was impossible to obtain any drone footage. After collecting all the necessary data on site and using the same methodology as in the other case studies, a three-dimensional model was created, (**Fig. 155** and **Fig. 156**).

To sum-up, the majority of towers are situated in fertile regions, typically at higher elevations that offer a view of the surrounding area. However, upon further inspection of the individual sites within the vicinity, it becomes apparent that a number of them would have likely been situated in more strategically advantageous surveillance positions if their primary purpose was military.

During the initial stages of settlement, rural towers functioned as administrative hubs, overseeing estates and providing housing for local rulers. Economic hardships and security risks, however, necessitated the conversion of several towers into purely military installations. The presence of numerous towers and the scarcity of vaulted structures, possibly remnants of courtyard houses, provide trustworthy evidence of medieval settlements and serve as valuable initial points of reference in the investigation of less significant village sites. It is important to note that through further survey there is always a possibility of finding new structures that have not been recorded before.

8. CAVE FORTIFICATIONS

Since Antiquity, caves, both natural and artificial, either independently or in conjunction, have been employed for various purposes, constituting a fundamental component of the region's settlement structure. This longstanding ancient tradition persisted throughout the Middle Ages, leading to the emergence of a diverse array of "troglodytic structures". The study of this condensed area, with its unique formations, significantly advanced our understanding of the medieval settlement history within the region.

In north Lebanon the caves are more considered as refuge caves and watching spots for security throughout the history for many denominations. One of the valleys hosting caves is the Beqaa valley, in Qammū'a Hirmil overlooking the Orontes River, is located the so-called Mār Marūn al-ʿĀṣī cave. The cave presents a series of natural and artificial caves cut inside the hill and walled with large built stone structures. Investigations and researchers attest that this fortified cave perceived in its current condition, as military outpost.⁴⁶⁴ This cave's function is considered as a garrison cave of the region.

The other valley where the fortified caves are more numerous and densely populated is the Qādīshā valley. In this valley the two main populations from which the "inhabitants" of the caves arrived were ecclesiastics seeking retreat and civilians looking for refuge. There are multiple examples in medieval documents specific to the studied area that validate the military implementation of geomorphological attributes of the terrain. The caves in the area indicate the presence of a dense network of village communities on the plateaus above the Qādīshā valley. The area consists of around 11 caves namely Qādīshā cave, al-Milād cave, al-Ḥamām cave, al-JamJim cave, Assiyām cave, al-Batrak cave, Arrawādif cave, ʿĀṣī al-Ḥadaṭh cave, Sayyidat Marīnā cave, Sayyidat Birbārā cave and ʿĀṣī Ḥawqā cave.⁴⁶⁵

The caves were considered as sanctuary where food and water could be stored in abundance. Since fortified caves possess a wide range of strategic values, it is reasonable to assume that they would have generated a larger amount of archaeological remains. Some of these refuges appear many times in the sources, which not only mention their names but also provide additional information regarding their locations, this is in contrast to the many

⁴⁶⁴ Baroudy & Abi-Aoun, 2018

⁴⁶⁵ GERLS, 1998

refuges that remain unnamed. Even the most impressive cave fortification could be omitted from historical data. Although they were built as shelters in times of danger, they may also have had the function of permanent lookouts for the control of the caravan trade.⁴⁶⁶

The Group d'Études et de Recherche's Souterraine du Liban, also known as GERSL, which is a subterranean study and research group in Lebanon, has been conducting surveys in the Qādīshā since 1988. These surveys have led to the discovery of various underground explorations and findings that support the current theory.⁴⁶⁷

The troglodyte refuge grottoes are known for their difficult accessibility. The Maghārat al-Ḥamām in the Qādīshā is a prime example of this, as it is believed to have been used as a fortress in the past.⁴⁶⁸ However, today the only remaining elements are basic ones typically found in refuges cave, such as scanty wall remains, rock-cut steps, several putlog holes, and a rock-cut cistern, it was used as a garrison cave of the region. Unlike the other fortified caves Qādīshā cave, al-Milād cave, al-JamJim cave, Assiyām cave, al-Batrak cave, Arrawādif cave, 'Āṣī al-Ḥadaṭh cave, Sayyidiat Marīnā cave, Sayyidat Birbārā cave and 'Āṣī Ḥawqā cave, their basic function was refuges caves or shelters.

Amongst all the refuge caves it is 'Āṣī al-Ḥadaṭh cave that is the most frequently mentioned and after its discovery it produced unique finds that are the most important referring to the material culture of a medieval village from the 13th century.

8.1. Case study 5 - 'Āṣī al-Ḥadaṭh grotto.

Ḥadaṭh was mentioned in the chronicle reported by Fahd Ibn 'Abdazzāhir,⁴⁶⁹ the Chronicle reports about a joint attack of the locants of Bsharrī and the Turcomans against this village in September 1163, and which ended in the massacre of its inhabitants. The witness of this massacre was the priest Zaḥariyyā, of the village of Bān, who at that time was living in the

⁴⁶⁶ Abi Aoun, Baroudy, & Chaouche, 1994

⁴⁶⁷ GERLS, 1998

⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid*

⁴⁶⁹ Ibn 'Abdlzāhir, 1992, pp. 43-44

Qādishā valley in the monastery of Mār Abūn. The attacks of the Sultan Baybars against the village of Ḥadath and the caves of the region in 1268 was reported by Ibn ‘Abdlzāhir.⁴⁷⁰

Situated in Jubbat Bsharrī, ‘Āṣī al-Ḥadath Grotto belongs to the village of Ḥadath and has been given the name ‘Āṣī because of the difficulty in accessing it. The region had a predominantly Maronite population, and this community maintained a strong bond of faith with the Church of Rome, while simultaneously fostering a close alliance and friendship with the Crusaders. Although this relationship had some positive aspects, it was not without its fair share of problems. When the Crusader states came to an end, the areas under their authority were returned to Muslim rule.

In 1268, the Mamluk Sultan Baybars laid siege to the city of Tripoli, which led to the start of the serious attacks against Jubbat Bsharrī. Although he was unable to conquer the city, he was still determined to seek revenge against the Christians in the mountain who had caused him trouble during the siege. As a result, a large number of villages, churches, and grottos were completely destroyed and the people living in them lost their lives. Among the villages in the area, there was Ḥawqā, Ḥadath and the surrounding region. The county of Tripoli's regions was gradually taken over by the Mamluks. Despite previous conflicts, in 1281, Sultan Qalawūn and Bohemond VII of Tripoli were able to come to an agreement and sign a truce that ensured the protection of all the county lands for a decade.

When the Crusader-Mamluk truce was being negotiated, a campaign led by the Mamluks in 1283 went to Jubbat Bsharrī, where they proceeded to destroy numerous villages, and either killed the people residing there or left them in a state of complete poverty. There are two versions of this campaign: one was reported by the head of the chancery offices in the Mamluk court, Ibn ‘Abdazzāhir, and the other was a comment written in the margin of one of the Maronite manuscripts discovered and published by Patriarch Istifān al-Duwayhī. Both versions provide valuable insight into the campaign and its historical significance.⁴⁷¹

While al-Duwayhī's version sheds light on the incidents that took place, it fails to elaborate on why the campaign was initiated. On the other hand, the Mamluk version

⁴⁷⁰ Ibn ‘Abdazzāhir, 1976, pp. 304-305, *Check Liban Souterrain*, 1, p. 6 & *Liban Souterrain*, 2, p. 6.

⁴⁷¹ Al-Duwayhī I. , 1951, pp. 145-146; Ibn ‘Abdazzāhir, 1961, p. 47; Salibi K. , 1991, pp. 62-63

provides a clear explanation of a patriarch who had become a nuisance to both the Crusaders and Mamluks, resulting in the decision to suppress his rebellion. Given the circumstances, it is understandable why the Crusaders chose to ignore the Mamluk campaign; however, the villages devastated by the campaign, as reported by al-Duwayhī, did not encompass the entirety of Jubbat Bsharrī. Instead, the campaign specifically targeted certain villages while sparing others, focusing its efforts on subduing the supporters of the rebellious patriarch. Furthermore, prior to 1283, the crusaders were facing severe divisions that resulted in revolution attempts and even a semi civil war.⁴⁷²

It was clearly demonstrated that a permanent garrison had been stationed in the interior space during the attack by the equipment that was discovered, which included a manuscript letter that made mention of it, providing evidence of its existence. Located in the Qannūbīn Valley, the cave's architectural layout includes three main levels. The only way to access the cave is through a shaft that leads you down to the main Hall, which is the main connection between the two other levels. The main hall's most noteworthy features are its space overlooking the valley, grain mill, and water basin. **(Fig. 65)** Ascending through a well or a slope from the main hall leads to another hall where the mummified medieval inhabitants were found. The lower level, which contains some rock blocks, can be accessed by climbing down through a well shaft from the main hall.⁴⁷³ The eight naturally mummified bodies of women and children were the most significant discoveries made in this cave, which also has yielded several interesting artefacts.⁴⁷⁴

As a result of an extensive study, documentation, and delve deep into these materials, it turned out that the cave is from the 13th century and not from an earlier time as previously believed.⁴⁷⁵ It seems from the ceramics found there that the cave was occupied for a long time and used for domestic activity. At that time, it is possible that hermitages and religious sites established, which could have been further developed into fortresses and refuge places. Due to the lack of security measures for the peasants of the mountains, the caves located in the valley were considered the safest place to seek protection during times of danger. The pottery collection discovered in ‘Āṣī al-Ḥadaṭh has been dated back to a specific period

⁴⁷² Baroudi F. , 1994, pp. 82-145

⁴⁷³ Description based on the plan drawn by Carl Stephane Baroudi & Khawaja, 2011, pp. 42-43

⁴⁷⁴ Baroudi F. , 1989

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid* pp. 10-13

between the 12th and 14th centuries. The cave revealed not only several Mamluk period manuscripts but also a number of coins, providing further evidence of their existence during the same period.⁴⁷⁶ The presence of the manuscripts shows at least that the villagers seem to have been well-to-do persons with at least some capable of writing and reading, we assume that the peoples were Maronites.

It is noted in historical records that the village of Ḥadath was impacted by a total of three significant raids during the period spanning the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.⁴⁷⁷ It is possible that due to this reason, the need arose to expand the refuge cave into multiple levels that could be inhabited. When the village population was at its peak of 300, the grotto could accommodate up to 100 people at a time. Various hypotheses have been proposed due to the discovery of a strategic water source in this grotto, all of which indicate that it was probably used for more than just a temporary shelter.⁴⁷⁸

Despite the difficulty in counting monastic sites and refuge caves, their existence suggests the presence of a rural population. This population not only served as the source for the first group but also was responsible for constructing the second. Situated in the Near East, precisely in the ʿĀṣī al-Ḥadaṭh area, the grotto is a unique archaeological site because it is the sole location where an entire medieval village and its associated material culture have been unearthed.

The excavation revealed a considerable number of artefacts, with a total of 293 individual items or sets being delivered to the National Museum. This provides a comprehensive insight into the daily lives of these rural communities. The collection comprised fragments of clothing (**Fig. 66**) and several manuscripts inscribed in Syriac and Arabic (**Fig. 67**). Crusader and Mamluk coinage. A variety of tools, including a wooden spoons (**Fig. 68**), wooden key, wooden needle, metallic objects such as nails and needles, a head of an iron axe, a piece of spur, a stitch of belt, a small bell for cattle, and a hair ornament. Additionally, to a knife blades and a scabbard, a set of arrow wood and iron arrowheads of varying shapes, a substantial set of pottery sherds, some of which bear inscriptions, and a set

⁴⁷⁶ Abi Aoun, Baroudy, & Chaouche , 1994

⁴⁷⁷ Al-Duwayhī I. , 1951, pp. 145-146

⁴⁷⁸ Baroudi , Badawi, & Khawaja, 2014, pp. 188-189

of oil lamps (**Fig. 69**) etc...⁴⁷⁹ These discoveries provide insight into the daily lives of the inhabitants, encompassing both functional and cultural aspects of the rural community.

During the ongoing survey, the cave of Saint Sharbel Mayfūq was recently discovered outside the surveyed area. Dating mainly from the Middle Ages, it has been converted into a prayer area or *mazār*, making it an important holy site.

The cave consists of a large room, estimated to be around 10.40 x 4.10m and 2.10m high, and a corridor measuring 9.00 x 3.00m long and 1.80m high. The entrance door measures 1.40 x 0.78m and has a 1.20 x 0.42m lintel. The defensive wall, which still exists and forms the final façade of the cave, was built with large ashlar measuring 80 x 35 cm. There are rectangular arrow slits in the wall measuring 1.10m high and 6 cm wide. From the end of this corridor a connecting shaft to a lower room was built. The lower room has an irregular shape measuring approximately 8.13 x 5.70m with a height of 1.60m. Since it is mentioned that from 1281 to 1284 only one patriarch of the Eastern Church was present on Mount Lebanon, the Maronite patriarch, while the others were absent,⁴⁸⁰ and that the patriarchal headquarters was located in Mayfūq at that time, this new discovery could have been the location of the headquarters (**Fig. 70- St. Sharbel Mayfūq, main façade. Fig. 70**).

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 258

⁴⁸⁰ Baroudi F. , 1994, p. 89



Fig. 65- Floor plan of 'Āṣī al-Ḥadath cave, drawn by the author based on the drawings published by GERSL.



Fig. 66- Fragments of clothing found in ‘Āṣī al-Ḥadaṭh cave. (photo from Baroudi , Badawi, & Khawaja, 2014, pp. 106-107)

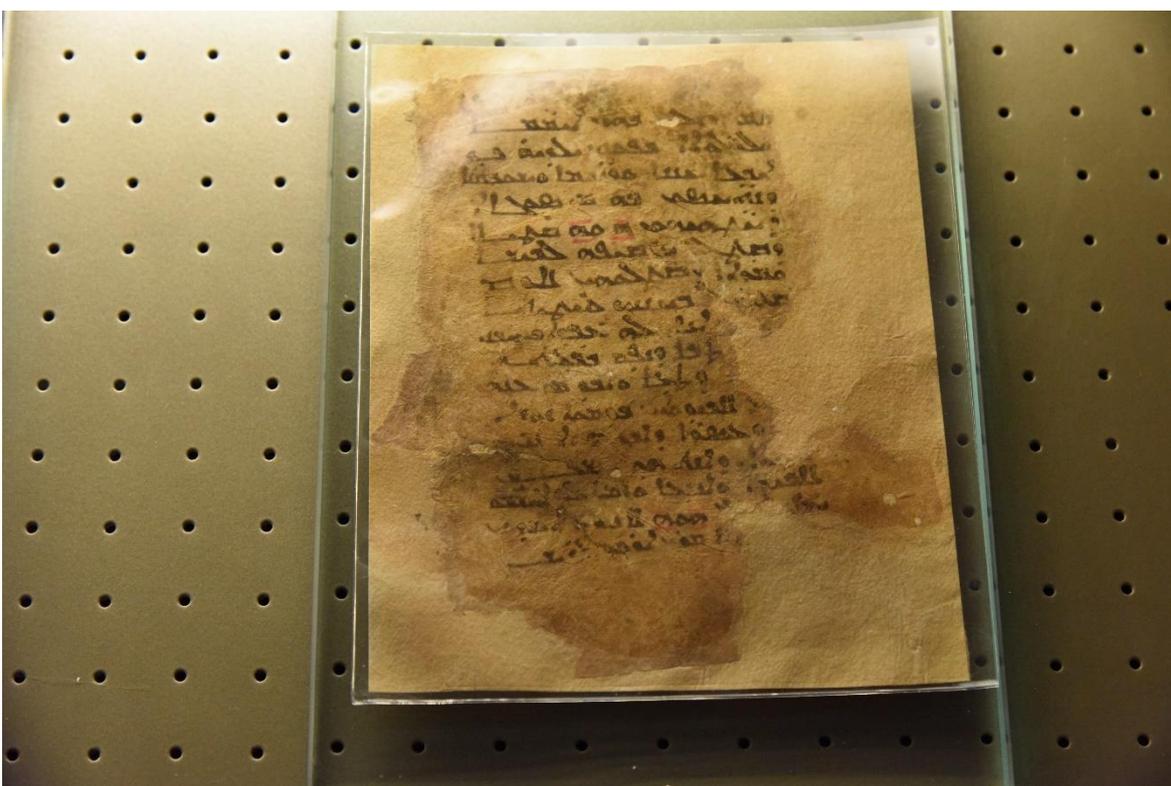


Fig. 67- Fragment of a Syriac manuscript, found in ‘Āṣī al-Ḥadaṭh cave. (photo done by Major B.)



Fig. 68- Decorated wooden spoon, found in 'Āṣī al-Ḥadaṭh cave. (photo done by Major B.)



Fig. 69- A set of oil lamps, found in 'Āṣī al-Ḥadaṭh cave. (photo done by Major B.)

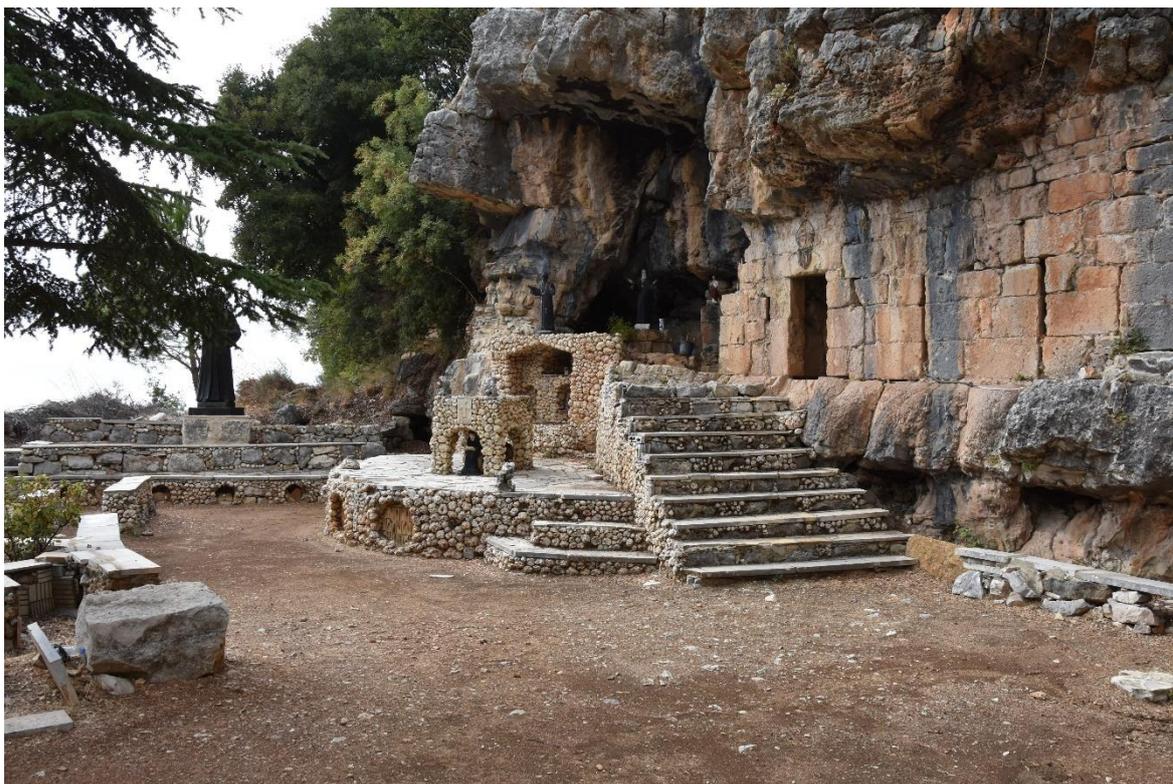


Fig. 70- St. Sharbel Mayfūq, main façade.

9. THE VILLAGE

According to historical sources, the Mount Lebanon region was home to many settlements due to the plentiful food supply. Additional details about the residents of this region are provided by two renowned historians. Ibn Jubayr describes the presence of hermits residing in the mountains,⁴⁸¹ while Ibn Baṭṭūta recounts his encounters with recluses who had chosen to abandon worldly affairs.⁴⁸² When discussing the region, Pococke placed a great emphasis on the security situation in Mount Lebanon.⁴⁸³ The topography of north Lebanon was traced by identifying the different medieval villages in the mountain mentioned in the descriptions of the 18th century travellers. Owing to some gaps in the accounts, several towns and villages were not included; however, this issue was resolved by cross-referencing or supplementing the itineraries with more detailed descriptions of other locations. Most of the towns and villages mentioned in these journeys survive to this day.

As Bartl has written:

*“It can be stated that during 12th to 14th centuries the plain of Akkar was a rather densely settled area dominated on a local level by 'Arqa/Irqa and on the regional level by Tripoli. Probably, the ancient settlement pattern might have been similar to the recent occupation, characterized by only a few larger villages in the plain and a chain of villages at the hilly fringes of the east and south. However, it might well be that further research will modify these preliminary results.”*⁴⁸⁴

The number of villages in the studied region may be estimated at around 38 on the basis of Paul Deschamps' *"Carte générale"* and written sources, 16 of them also being mentioned in the Latin sources. Depending on the outcome of a survey conducted on a larger scale, there is a probability that this number may undergo significant changes in the future.

⁴⁸¹ Ibn Jubayr, 1953, p. 300

⁴⁸² Ibn Baṭṭūta, 1958, pp. 115-116

⁴⁸³ Pococke 1745:104

⁴⁸⁴ Bartl, 1999, p. 32

Karin Bartl's survey resulted in the discovery of 21 medieval settlements, dating between the 12th and 14th centuries, 10 of which can be accurately dated to the period under investigation. These settlements are all located within the studied region.⁴⁸⁵

Out of the 121 sites identified by historical sources, travellers and scholars, 92 are villages. 35 sites out of the 92 are mentioned as villages in the written sources. 29 sites mentioned in Latin sources which 13 of them still exist today, preserving the remains of medieval structures, including churches. 9 sites have been identified and located in the region but should be visited for field survey. These include Ardacium/Ardi, Bethorafig/Btouratig, Malmedal/Majdil, Misdella/Majdalya, Cafrahael/Kafr Kahil, Aer/Dagr al-‘Ain, Ceraphtenie/Sir ed-Danye, Derie/Daraya, and Addine/‘Abdīn, (Check Table 2). Four villages referred to in the Latin sources that have yet to be identified. These include Bethamum, Bethsama, Bocombre, and Benharan.

On the basis of the discovery of churches (mentioned in Table 1, Table 3, Table 4) it has been determined that approximately 57 villages were added to the list, showing remains dating back to the medieval era. Adding together the 92 medieval villages, Table 2, and the discovery of the 10 sites by Bartl dating back to the 12th and 13th centuries, 102 villages are located in North Lebanon at the time of writing. (Fig. 81)

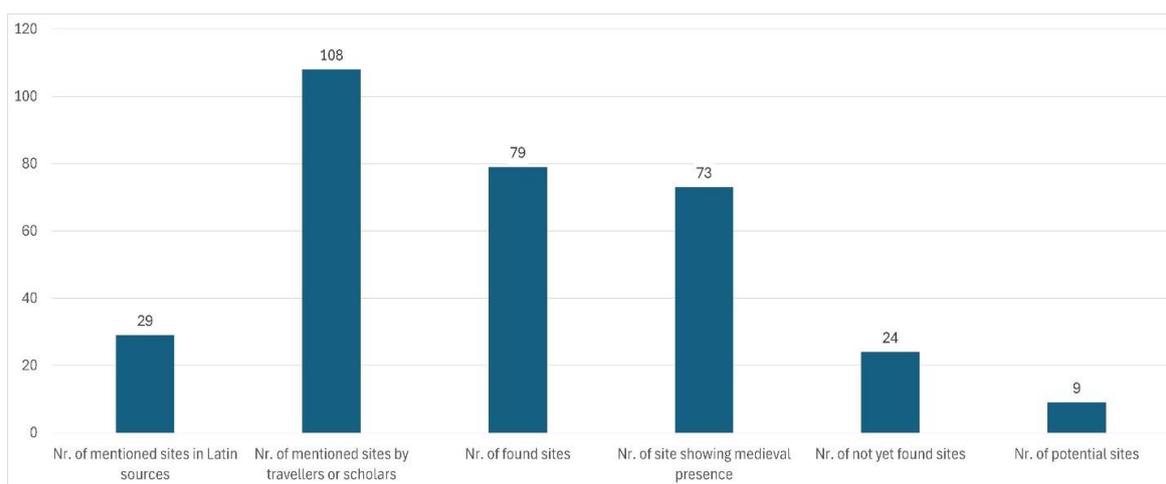


Fig. 71-Diagram showing the medieval sites found in North Lebanon.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p. 30

Village houses in most of northern Lebanon are traditionally built of dry stone, which was abundant in the region but tends to disappear after a period of neglect. In the northern plains, where there is a very thick layer of alluvium on top of the rocky layers, mudbrick was the predominant material used, and this may have been the case in medieval times.

Mudbrick was often used in the construction of the houses, but unfortunately there is little evidence of this material. There are almost no excavated remains present, we can only guess as these materials do not leave extensive traces and the best parallels are the descriptions of travellers who still saw these houses in use. For example, the houses in nearby 'Arqā are said to have been built using only "*whitewash and earth*", leaving little evidence of their existence, date back to the 13th century.⁴⁸⁶ A version of the *tabiyya* (or *tapial*, *pisé*), a rammed-earth and quicklime/gypsum construction. There is currently no evidence of deliberately planned and well-executed settler villages such as those found in Palestine.⁴⁸⁷

Another case is the Maqām al-Rabb temple site at Menjez, a Roman temple built of black basalt stone, was certainly inhabited throughout the Middle Ages, as evidenced by the large collection of medieval pottery observed during our recent survey. The huge quantity of 12th - 13th century pottery testifies that the site, which still had considerable standing walls, was reused in the Crusader period as the site of a settlement, possibly a small village. The site covers an area of around 3990 sqm, the *cella* and the *temenos* together. The *temenos* contains around 14 houses based on the remaining walls each house measuring between 7 x 6m and 9 x 8m with a wall thickness of 1m as a rough estimation 18 more houses could fit in the *temenos*. The walls of the *temenos* may have served to defend the houses, while the well-preserved building of the *cella* may have served as an internal redoubt.

200 years ago, villages typically had populations of a few hundred to a few thousand people. This period marked a transition from agrarian societies to more industrialised communities as a result of the Industrial Revolution, which began in the late 18th century. Many villages grew as people moved from rural areas to urban centres for work, but those that remained rural often saw their populations stabilise or grow modestly. Medieval villages

⁴⁸⁶ Ibn Shaddād, 1962, p. 92

⁴⁸⁷ Pringle D. , 2019, pp. 97-221

were generally smaller than those of 200 years ago. A typical medieval village might have been home to between 100 and 300 people, made up of a few dozen households. Population density was influenced by the practice of subsistence farming, where families lived close to their fields for efficiency. Villages often included communal spaces such as a church or market, which were crucial for social and economic interaction. Today's villages can vary greatly from region to region or even country to county, but modern villages often have populations of a few hundred to several thousand. The concept of the village has also expanded to include urban villages, which are neighbourhoods within cities that retain a village-like character.

Between the 12th and 13th centuries, the 'Akkār plain was a densely populated area, dominated locally by 'Arqā and regionally by Tripoli as already mentioned. The ancient site of Ḥalbā is completely covered by the modern village, so that archaeological traces are hard to find on the surface. According to Bartl it is likely that the ancient settlement pattern was similar to the more recent occupation, characterised by a few larger villages on the plain and a chain of villages on the hilly fringes to the east and south.⁴⁸⁸ Based on the map there are around 2 to 3 villages per km².

The most stable constructions were found in the churches or mosques located in Muslim villages. Although Muslim villages were present in the southern part of Mount Lebanon, they were rare in the northern region during the 12th and 13th centuries. Because of this peculiarity, churches tend to survive longer, making them reliable markers of the size and importance of each particular village. Churches serve as indicators of villages in northern Lebanon and can occasionally provide insights into the religious beliefs of past inhabitants.

9.1. Churches.

In contrast to the abundance of towers discovered in the Syrian coastal region,⁴⁸⁹ the Lebanese area is characterized by a denser collection of medieval churches. These churches

⁴⁸⁸ Bartl, 1999, p. 32

⁴⁸⁹ Major B. , 2015

were mostly built on sites that were previously occupied by other churches or sacred places, including the remains of Roman temples or churches from the Byzantine era. Reusing the ashlar in their new construction is a common practice in many of these cases. Various types of churches are dispersed throughout the northern part of Lebanon, particularly in the southern section of the county of Tripoli, with a significant concentration in the regions of Jubayl, Batrūn, Kūra, and 'Akkār. (Check Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4).

The County of Tripoli has the largest concentration of medieval rural churches in the Syrian Lebanese coastal region. The Lebanese part of the County of Tripoli has been able to maintain its religious heritage as evidenced by the continued operation of churches that have been active since the legacy of faith was established. With their unique architectural designs and religious significance, the churches in the county are a constant reminder of the region's past and its reflective devotion to faith.

Following the classification of the various architectural styles used in the construction of medieval churches, the next logical step is to classify the churches themselves and the denominations that presently worship in them. As depicted in the map that displays the categorized churches, it can be observed that the churches are segregated into two primary denominations, namely the Maronite Church and the Orthodox Church (**Fig. 72**). One of the most magnificent highlights to observe in several of the medieval churches are the medieval murals.

The shapes, colours, and historical significance of this place bear witness to a culturally and historically rich past that has had a reflective impact on the surrounding region. The establishment of the churches' structure all over North Lebanon, especially in the studied region, was a significant accomplishment despite the devastating genocide of the Mamluks and invasions. The churches, which have the Latin character, are mostly dated from the 12th and 13th centuries, and are primarily located in the County of Tripoli. The presence of Latin occupation had a visible effect on churches, which is evident from all the points mentioned earlier.

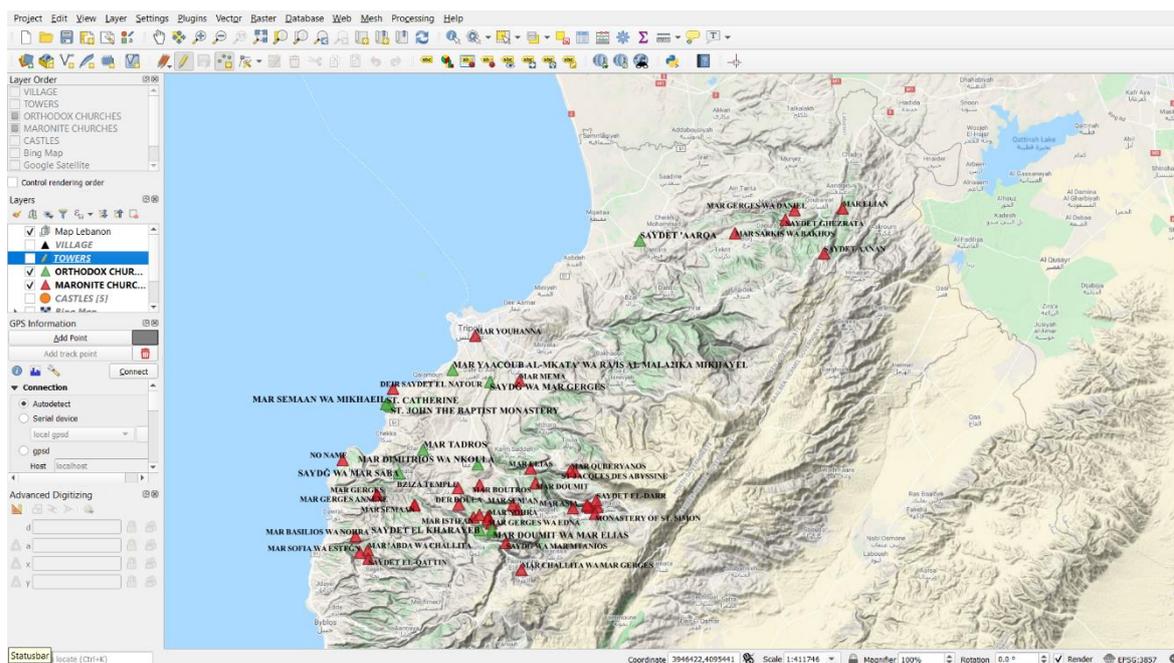


Fig. 72-Churches in North Lebanon, Maronites in Red and Orthodox in Green.

9.1.1- Type of churches found in the region under study.

From an architectural standpoint, the churches located in Northern Lebanon were classified into six main categories. Throughout the period from the eleventh to the thirteenth century, a large number of small chapels were built in the northern region of Lebanon.

9.1.1.1- Basilica type churches.

Churches of this type are relatively well preserved and often still in use. Their typology is naturally more complex, and they are the largest and most remarkable. The least common of all the plans were those that followed a basilica layout.⁴⁹⁰ Churches of this type have a rectangular or square plan. They often have three naves, a high central nave and two lower side naves, separated from each other by pillars or columns. Some churches of this type have a central semicircular apse, two semicircular apses and others have three semicircular apses, the central one being the largest and the lateral ones smaller. As in the case of the Batrūn

⁴⁹⁰ Nordiguian L. , 2013, pp. 169-194

region, only 2 churches have this type of plan and both of them have a central apse, Mār Sāba 'Iddī Batrūn **Fig. 73** and St. George Rāshkīdā. As for the Kūra region, there are 4 churches of this type, 3 of which have a central apse, and they are St. Geoges and St. Phocas Amyūn, and St. Sergius and St. Bacchus Kaftūn. The only church that has 3 apses in this area is Mār Jirjis in Kafar 'Akkā, case study 6 **Fig. 82**.

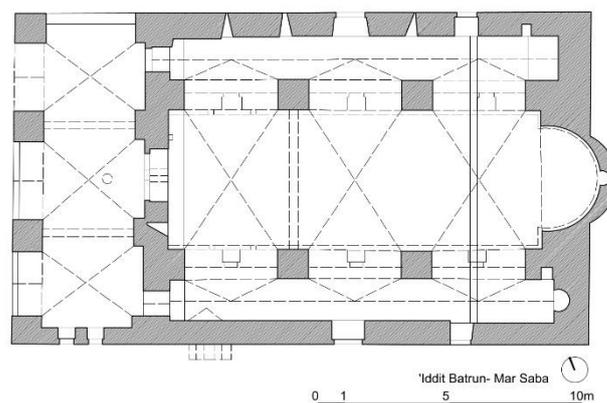


Fig. 73- Mār Sāba 'Iddī Batrūn, drawn by the author based on the drawings published by Levon Nordiguan

9.1.1.2- Single nave churches.

Single-nave churches are the most common in the region, (check Table 3 and Table 4). These churches usually have a simple rectangular one-space plan covered with a barrel vault ceiling. The layout typically draws attention directly to the altar, as the church is centred by a semicircular apse which houses the altar, and the main entrance to the churches usually faces the apse. The construction of many of these churches took place on the sites that had been previously occupied by older churches, which were usually built during Byzantine times, or on the remnants of Roman temples that were left abandoned, with some of their ashlar being reused in the construction. For example, the church of Our Lady of Al-Kharāyib, Kfarḥilda in Batrūn, St Catherine in 'Anfah and the St. Saviour of Qubba, case study 8 **Fig. 74**.

There are exceptions and variations, where the single nave church has an adjacent room, so the plan turns to be an L shape single nave plan, in the case of Kusbā in Our Lady of Hamatūrā.

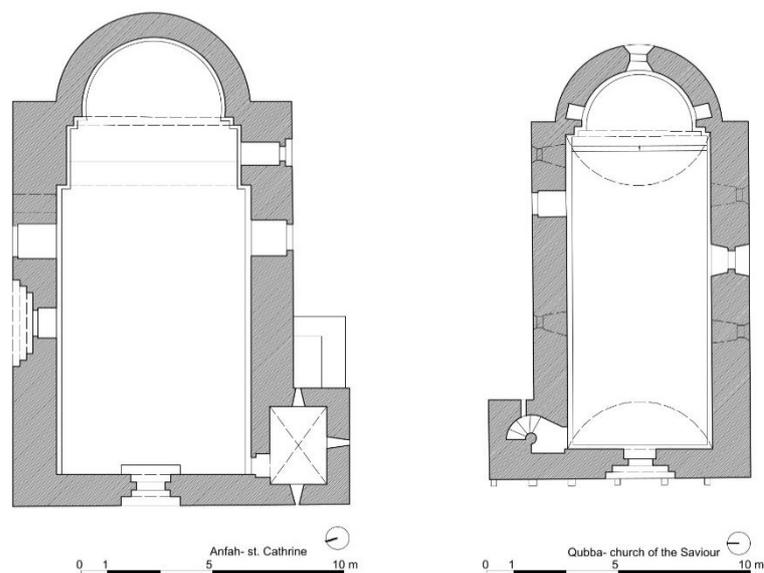


Fig. 74- Floor plan of St Catherin church ' Anfah and the floor plan of St. Saviour church Qubba drawn by the author.

9.1.1.3- Double nave churches

The construction of double-naved churches has been a recurring theme throughout history. The double nave church is the type of churches where it started to exist as a single nave church and at a certain time a second nave was added. The two churches are built parallel to each other, with a connecting point that makes them appear as one church. Communication between the two naves is made possible through later openings in the common wall. For example, in the Kūra district church of St. Simon and St. Michael the Archangel ' Anfah, and in the Batrūn district the church of Our Lady & St. Anthony located in Tannūrīn al-Taḥta as well as Dayr al-Ṣalīb Ḥadshīt (**Fig. 84**) and Mār Mtanius Diddih, (St. Antonius).

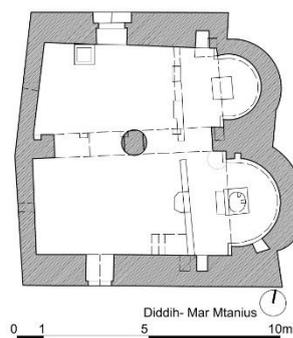


Fig. 75- Floor plan Mār Mtanius church, Diddih, drawn by the author based on the drawings published by LN

9.1.1.4- Double churches

The double churches represent another category of ecclesiastical architecture that is not found in the area under study but is worth mentioning in order to have a complete categorisation of all the medieval church types found in Lebanon. These churches have two parallel rectangular spaces that were built simultaneously and can be accessed through two western doors. However, the two spaces are not connected. Their dedication is divided between two different saints, such as St. Theodore and St. John in 'Iddih Jbayl, and the second example is St. Simon and St. Abdas (Mār Sim'ān wa Mār 'Abdā) in 'Ain Kfā' (Fig. 76).

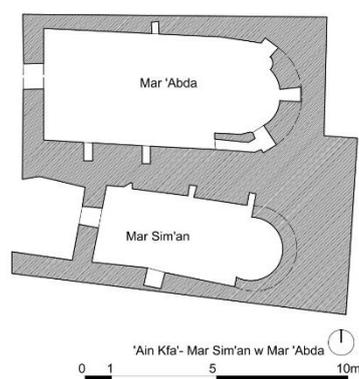


Fig. 76- Floor plan of Mār Sim'ān wa Mār 'Abdā church, 'Ain Kfā', drawn by the author based on the drawings published by LN

9.1.1.5- Double churches on the same axes

The churches of the double churches on the same axes type were built at different times, positioned in line one behind the other. Communication between the two churches was established through later openings in the common east wall of the western church, which allowing access to the west door of the eastern one. Despite being two different churches, they have been constructed in such a manner that they touch each other, creating the appearance of a single church. Example St. Nicholas & Our Lady of Bizāz located in Baḥdaydāt, and in the Batrūn district the church of St. George (Mār Jirjis) located in Rāshkīdā (**Fig. 77**).

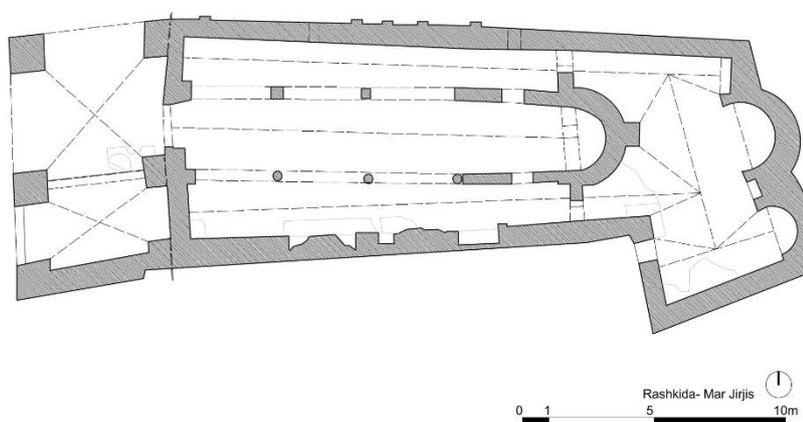


Fig. 77- Floor plan of Mār Jirjis church, Rāshkīdā, drawn by the author based on the drawings published by NL

9.1.1.6- Twin churches

Among the different types of churches, some are built with two naves constructed together simultaneously, known as double-naved churches. In order to connect the two naves, a common middle wall has been constructed with rectangular openings or arches. Another way to establish this connection is through one centrally placed column. When it comes to monasteries or similar locations, it is common for the southern nave to be designated as the main nave, with the name of the site often reflecting this fact. On the other hand, the northern nave, which is usually smaller than the southern nave, is designed to serve as a secondary nave. Like in the case of St Challita and St. George in Tannūrīn al-Fawqā and St. George (Mār Jirjis) and St Edna (Mār 'Idnā) in Ḥardīn (**Fig. 78**), and St Thecla (Mār Taqla) and St

Estephan (Mār 'Istifān) in Shāmāt and Sayyidat al- Bizāz wa-Mār Sim'ān Buqsmay (**Fig. 79**).

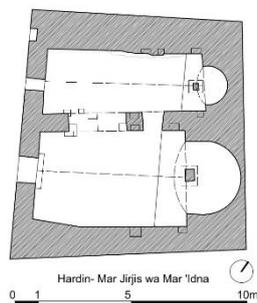


Fig. 78- Floor plan of Mār Jirjis wa Mār 'Idnā church in Ḥardīn, drawn by the author based on the drawings published by LN

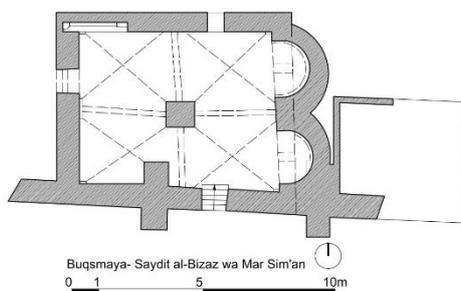


Fig. 79- Saydit al- Bizāz wa Mār Sim'ān Buqsmay, drawn by CC based on the drawings published by LN

Theories of construction

Different functions and religious necessities led to the creation of churches, which served unique purposes depending on the region and period. The double churches type has a surprisingly high ration amongst the rural chapels of the Lebanon and there has been many theories and speculations about their function.

The first speculation suggests that the early Christians utilized the same structures to both bury their martyrs and to conduct their communal worship. As a result, these churches served as dual-purpose locations where the Divine Liturgy could be performed alongside

burial services. The burial of martyrs' bodies in churches by Christians dates back to the 4th century, and later this practice extended to the burial of their priests.⁴⁹¹

Such churches served two functions, one funerary and the other martyrological, concerned with worship of the martyr. According to tradition, these functions have been handed down and something commonly seen is that one nave, typically the northern one, was designated for funerary use. The presence of frescoes, crosses, and the tombs of esteemed clergy members all contribute to the emphasis of the concept behind the church of Our Lady of the Dormition & St George located in Bkiftīn.⁴⁹²

During the Crusader period, a different approach was sometimes taken, where Latin settlers would build a twin church, one of which would be used for the burial of the donor or a family member, while the other would be used for religious purposes. This can be seen in places such as the church of Mār Shallitā wa Mār Jirjis in Tannūrīn al-Fawqā. Alternatively, they may have used one of the existing naves for burial purposes, creating a new function for the church. This is clear in places such as Kusbā, St Dimitrios & St Nicholas, where the funerary function was added to the original purpose of the church.⁴⁹³

One of the theories was that the building served two different religious communities. Latin and Orthodox. The fluctuating relations between the different religious communities in Lebanon during the Crusades would have necessitated this type of church. As in Cyprus, and possibly in some places in Palestine, the existence of two naves is due to the addition of a Latin chapel to an earlier Orthodox church. This allowed both liturgies (Greek and Latin) to be celebrated in the same building (at different times).⁴⁹⁴

9.1.1.7. Grave church

The graves in this kind of church are typically found in various areas of the building. There are three potential locations, the first option is a big hollow within the wall of the nave or

⁴⁹¹ Check the website <http://home.balamand.edu.lb/english/ARPOA>. Religious Architecture of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch. University Of Balamand, Lebanon. The website shows all the churches mentioned in the text, most of them with picture short description and a plan.

⁴⁹² Cruikshank-Dodd, 2014, pp. 313-337

⁴⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁴ Pringle D. , 1993, p. 206

the apse. The second option is an underground vault located below the church. The third option is an open-air space, specifically a courtyard beside the church. Among the churches containing tombs, the first type are cave churches. These churches are built within natural cave formations and contain graves that have been carved into the rock, like for example the case in Qalamūn St Marina cave, (**Fig. 80**, **Fig. 150** and **Fig. 151**).⁴⁹⁵ Other type of funerary churches could be single-naved, like St John the Baptist church located in Anfah.

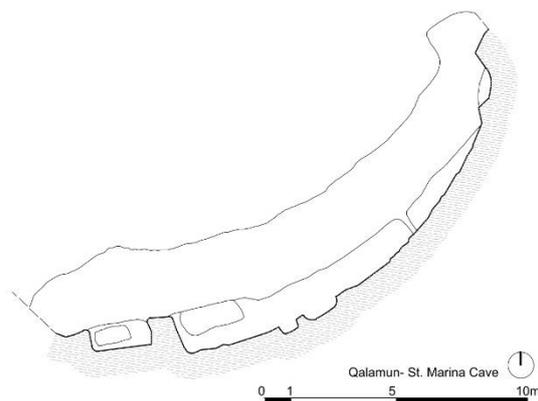


Fig. 80- Floor plan of Mār Marīnā cave, Qalamun, drawn by the author.

9.2. Analyses of Medieval Village Churches.

The presence of great numbers of churches in North Lebanese villages is not simply a result of chance, but rather a complex interplay of historical, denominational, and social factors. Thus, the presence of churches is an indicator of the existence of a medieval village. While the churches may not always reflect the village's size and significance, they serve none the less as a religious indicator of its former residents.

A number of churches have an additional building that was constructed either by the Frankish settlers or by local residents who were affiliated with an original church. This was done for three primary reasons. First reason, it is important to have a second place available to accommodate two different liturgies, for instance, the Catholic liturgy and the Orthodox,

⁴⁹⁵ Cruikshank-Dodd, 2014, pp. 292-293

in order to properly represent and cater to both communities' needs. To fulfil the requirement for expansion while reducing expenses, an extra church was constructed directly adjacent to the original. This was the second reason for the addition. In certain cases, the Crusaders would construct a new church beside the original one as a sign of reverence and to lay to rest a distinguished personage or clergy, which is considered as the third reason.

When it comes to the distribution of churches in North Lebanon, the largest concentration of these religious sites being located in the regions of Batrūn and Jbayl.⁴⁹⁶ However, other major clusters of churches can be found in Kūrā⁴⁹⁷ and 'Akkār, which are essentially the areas that made up the southern part of the county of Tripoli.

Based on the survey conducted up to the submission of this thesis, 124 churches dating from the 12th and 13th centuries were found in the region under study. **Table 1** Their regional distribution shows 24 churches in the 'Akkār region, 31 churches in the Qādīshā region, 29 churches in the Batrūn region, 38 churches in the Kūrā region, and 2 churches in the Tripoli region.

Analysis of the distribution of churches in the regions of Batrūn and Kūrā reveals distinct architectural and denominational patterns, suggesting wider socio-cultural dynamics. **Table 3** and **Table 4**.

Architectural dominance of single nave churches, in both regions shows that there is a clear predominance of single nave churches with a single apse, which is the most common and simple architectural form. In Batrūn, 20 out of 29 churches which is 69% are single nave, and in Kūrā, 27 out of 38 counting 71% have this configuration. This suggests that this architectural style was predominant in both regions during the studied era.

Variation in complex church design is also present in these two regions. Double and triple nave churches are less common but show slight variations between the regions. Batrūn has 6 double nave churches, accounting for 21%, and 2 triple nave churches, accounting for 7%. Kūrā, on the other hand, has 5 double nave churches 13% and a higher proportion of

⁴⁹⁶ Hélou, 2007, pp. 397-434

⁴⁹⁷ Nordiguan L. , 2011, pp. 7-51

triple nave churches, 13%, 5 triple nave churches, of which 2 have a triple apse, 1 double apse and 2 single apses, showing a greater variety of more complex church designs.

In Batrūn, the Maronite denomination predominates, with 17 out of 29 churches, or 59%, while the Orthodox churches are fewer, with only 10%. In addition, 9 churches are of unspecified denomination yet 31,03%. In contrast, Kūrā has a greater presence of Orthodox churches, accounting for 15 out of 38 or 39%, compared to only 5% for Maronite churches, with a significant number of undetermined churches with 21 in total, or 55,26%.

This distribution of architectural typologies and religious affiliations shows that these regions, located along confessional boundaries, may have accommodated a greater number of churches to meet the overlapping needs of different communities. The prevalence of single nave churches with simple apses probably reflects a practical, accessible architectural style that could serve multiple communities, while the presence of more complex structures may indicate areas of greater religious or cultural importance. The combination of Maronite and Orthodox churches, suggests a shared use of these religious spaces, further supporting the hypothesis that the proximity of different denominations contributed to the construction and use of a greater number of churches in these border regions. Thus, the data shows that the complex religious landscape of Batrūn and Kūrā, characterised by both architectural uniformity and denominational diversity, likely arose from the need to accommodate multiple communities within a geographically and culturally contested area.

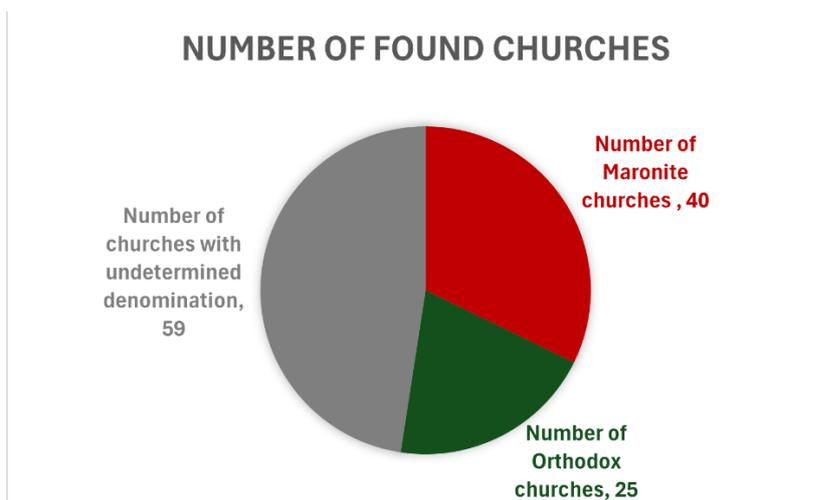


Fig. 81-Diagram showing the number of churches found in the North Lebanon and their denominations.

9.2.1. Examples of Medieval Village Churches:

Case study 6_ Kafar ‘Akkā

The village of Kafar ‘Akkā, Kafaracha, mentioned in a Latin document of Delaville Le Roulx,⁴⁹⁸ caught the attention of scholarship from the earliest times and the first real scholar of Crusader architecture, Guillaume Rey has also visited it in person, describing:

*« Cafaraca, fief du comté de Tripoli, dont le nom fut porté par ses possesseurs. Ce casal avait été donné à l'Hôpital en 11è s, par Pons, comte de Tripoli; il s'identifie avec le village appelé Kefer-Akka, ou Keferka au sud-sud-est de cette ville. On y voit encore quelques vestiges d'un château du moyen âge».*⁴⁹⁹

Despite efforts to determine the location and identification of this castle, it still remains unclear. The first person to bring attention to the remodelled building in the centre of town, near the ancient church of Our Lady and on the highest point, which could be considered as an example of a medieval fortified house, was Jean-Claude Voisin.⁵⁰⁰ The question he poses is whether or not the building being referred to is the final remaining trace of this fortified structure. The entryway to this building is unique, as it features a door with a low arch that is formed by three keystones. Additionally, the door is decorated with a beautiful hammer key. The space inside the barrel vault is segmented into three transverse bays with the assistance of two robust arches that provide reinforcement.

St. George's Church in Kfar ‘Akkā is located in the village square, on the northern edge of the present town. Relatively spacious, it is the parish church of this town. This church is to our knowledge the only one in Lebanon to have a cross plan inscribed in a rectangle (**Fig. 82**). The large subdivisions of this plan are also visible from the outside because the spans that form the arms of the cross are not only wider but also higher than the complete church. The church has a barrel-vaulted ceiling. The building is designed as a church of

⁴⁹⁸ RRH no. 118

⁴⁹⁹ Rey E. G., 1883, p. 364

⁵⁰⁰ Nordiguian & Voisin, 1999, p. 392

basilica plan that has three semicircular apses. The central apse, which forms the hub of the cross, is naturally wider and higher than the two smaller apses that are located in the extension of the naves. Passages have been arranged in the eastern part of the walls dividing the naves to facilitate communication between the central apse and the two other apses. Everywhere else, large arcades made the communication between the naves and the spans in the dividing walls.

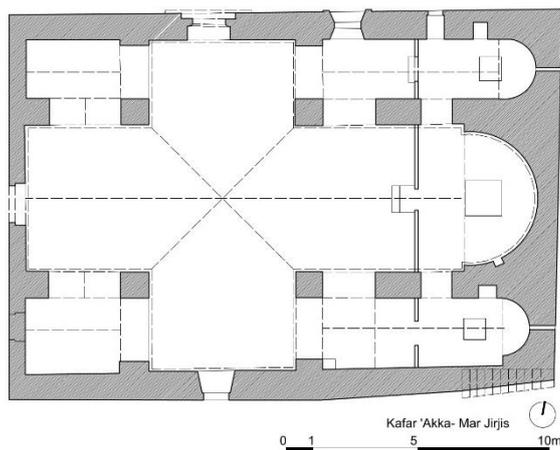


Fig. 82- Mār Jirjis Kafar 'Akkā, drawn by the author based on the drawings published by LN

Two main decorative elements are recognizable in this church. The first is the cornice running around the periphery of the space.

The second is the moulder portal that stands out clearly in the rubble stonework of the north wall. Although there are many beautiful examples of architectural moldings, such as those found at the south portal of the Cathedral of Byblos or the west portal of the Castle Chapel of the Castle of Marqab, we can also compare those found at the churches of Saint-Sauveur de Qubba and Sainte-Catherine de 'Anfah, which are just as impressive despite being less well-known.⁵⁰¹

Access to the central nave can be gained through one of the two doors located in the west facade of the church. The doors in question are quite straightforward in design, with

⁵⁰¹ Coupel, 1941, pp. 35-55

almost identical sides and lintels, are crowned by a low relieving arch; it is worth noting that the doors share a similar typology. Above the relief arch of the west central gate, a 0.40 x 0.43m slab carved with a cross is inserted into the exterior facing of the wall. Today the church is not well lit due to the scarcity of windows, which in their present state have in any case been redesigned. The only source of light that can be attributed to the medieval era is the skylight that pierces the top of the west wall, specifically above the central door.

Although the exterior walls of the church may appear to be uniform, upon closer inspection, it is evident that there are numerous variations in the way they have been treated. The walls of this building are built of regularly sized rubble blocks and some areas inside are built with very well-cut ashlar, apart from the northwest and southwest corners, which are reinforced with larger tie-stones.

St. George's Church, located in Kfar 'Akkā, has a plan and elevation that are typical of the Byzantine style. The Georgian Church of the Holy Cross, which is situated near Jerusalem, provides the closest parallel.⁵⁰² The presence of square putlog holes can be observed in the walls of the barrel vaults, placed at regular intervals and at the same height. The putlog holes were utilized for the purpose of securing the ends of the beams that were used to construct the wooden scaffolding needed for the execution of the vault. The holes that remained unused after the scaffoldings were dismantled were cleverly repurposed to house acoustic jars.

In spite of its strange and rather exceptional plan, the high number of the masonry marks makes it very likely that the church was of Latin work. It was very likely intended to be the parish church of the Latin community living in this important settlement in the hinterland of Tripoli. The high number of simple crosses carved into its walls might indicate a pilgrim site of some importance too, which in this case might be one of the reasons for the construction of such a lofty church in a medieval village relatively far from any cities.

⁵⁰² Enlart C. , 1926; Enlart C. , 1928; Pringle D. , 1998, pp. 33-40

Case study 7_ Amyūn

Amyūn village is located in the Kūra region, bordered by Batrūn and Tripoli, and was one of the most fertile areas at that time. The remaining medieval traces show a special aspect in this village that indicates a very considerable Crusader settlement. During the Middle Ages, some villages were seemingly rather extended as the case of Amyūn village shows. The present centre of the municipality still has 4 to 5 churches of medieval origin, for example, Sts Sergius and Bacchus, a medieval chapel with no trace of the existing monastery, located on the outskirts to the southwest of the village.

Many questions were raised, and the main one was: what is the reason for so many churches in such a village? Could the fact of having many churches make possible that during the Middle Ages one or two churches belonged to a new satellite village in the neighbourhood? Could it be an indicator of the different denominations and sects present in the region? Is there a possibility that in addition to the different denominations, there was a sponsorship of an individual high ranking person who was financing the building of one or two churches?

St Dūmit's church, located to the west of the old village and built during the twelfth century was used as a conventual chapel. St Simon's church located in the old village has a square plan constructed during the Middle Ages. The church of St George al-Kāfir, dating from the twelfth century, is known as a funerary chapel, located on the southern side of the village on the road leading to Bzīzā village. In the eastern quarter of the old town is a medieval rectangular grotto, dedicated to St Marīnā, showing some remains of the medieval sanctuary on the ground.⁵⁰³ Even if the churches on the fringes belonged to neighbouring villages, the two adjacent medieval churches of St Phocas and St George show that the settlement existing in Amyūn had a considerable population.

The St. Phocas church built on the site of a seventh-century Melkite convent, is a church of somewhat irregular basilican plan, in which the north wall is not parallel to the south wall, with three naves separated by triple-arched arcades and covered by slightly

⁵⁰³ARPOA, name of the churches in Amioun village, <http://home.balamand.edu.lb/english/ARPOA.asp?id=2685&fid=270&strPageName=Liste%20des%20%E9glises>

pointed barrel vaults, (**Fig. 108**). The central nave of the church has an interior width of 4.50 m, while the two laterals' naves have interior widths of 2.10 m. The building has an average total width of 11.80 m. The springing of another two arches visible on the west front of the church suggest that church originally extended at least one bay further to the west. With the help of leading experts, it has been estimated that the length of the structure in its original form was about 14.40 meters, and that the damage caused resulted in the destruction of at least one span of arches.⁵⁰⁴

It was quite noticeable that the plan underwent significant expansion, thus making it shorter.⁵⁰⁵ In order to determine the total length, we need to include an additional 1.80m for the projection of the apse. At the end of the nave, the apse has an internal radius of 1.65m and presents itself externally as a rectangular shape. The niche that is visible towards the northeast corner may not be from the same construction period as the church itself. The position of a secondary door may be denoted by the presence of two header stones with no clear shape and a lintel with crushed mouldings that have been reused; these elements are located towards the outside. Out of all the doors available, the only one that is still left to be opened is the one that leads to the south side.

The quoins made of larger stones that are intricately cut and arranged in a harp pattern strengthen the church, which is typically constructed of limestone and mortar and has a simple design. It enhanced the masonry with a concern for cohesion that was achieved by embedding the antique granite column shafts in various locations throughout. The southern wall displays the ends of five columns, while the northern wall has another five with varying diameters. A small oculus, which is carved out of a block and placed above the head area of the apse, is the only window in the building.

The walls, pillars, and apse are partially covered with paintings that contain the decorative elements. In addition, this particular construction method is quite uncommon in Tripoli County.⁵⁰⁶ The estimated capacity of this church was around 50 persons. It contains numerous frescoes in the apse on the walls, (**Fig. 109**), and on the square shape pillars supporting the vault. They certainly date from the late twelfth and the early thirteenth

⁵⁰⁴ Coupel, 1941, p. 46

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid*

⁵⁰⁶ Enlart C. , 1925, p. 33

centuries. The iconographical analysis indicates that this church was used for funerals and baptisms.⁵⁰⁷

Most likely St. Phocas has been used by the local Near-Eastern Christian community, the Orthodox. The hardship of attributing a church to concrete denominations based on its form and frescoes even if they are well preserved like in St. Phocas is a major task.⁵⁰⁸ Taking into consideration the speed and other factors, which determine the quality of the paintings in question, the geographical origin of the painters and their technical skills cannot be obvious. The appearance of the paintings shows that the donor Philip, a member of the Frankish elite, invested in the decoration of this church. Even though the name Philip was a common name among the nobles of the Frankish states, Philip of Ibelin is the perfect candidate for the financing of the St. Phocas church.⁵⁰⁹ Looking through the ancestors the possible connection of the Ibelin family to this Latin-style church painted possibly with Greek Orthodox painters from Cyprus is one of the suggestions. The fact that the Franks were financing, commissioning, and organizing programmes, expands the possibilities and the analysis. That is why it is complex to identify the denominations related to this church.⁵¹⁰

Nada H elou has provided an oppositional perspective on the painting located on the north wall. The painting itself is a large composition that features the figure of the Apostle Philip, with a donor standing below him. Within a monumental vegetal decoration, which is a widespread feature of mural decorations in Lebanon and Syria, the composition is framed by an arch supported by two columns. The inscription that accompanied the supplicant was once believed to repeat the standard formula, 'Philip, the servant of God,' which was assumed to be the name of the supplicant. H elou assumes that based on the evidence presented, Immerzeel made a tentative identification of this person as a Latin noble who belonged to the family of the lords of Besmeddin. This noble would have been married to Mary, daughter of Raymond of Besmeddin (1220-53).⁵¹¹ H elou further suggests that the portrait of Mary may have been located on the opposite pillar, however, the presence of a second layer of painting has confusion and the portrait is now hardly visible. The northeast pillar in Rafca

⁵⁰⁷ Immerzeel M. , 2009, p. 89; Nordiguian & Voisin, 1999, pp. 340-341; Dodd E. C., 2004, pp. 39-84; H elou, 2008, p. 12, 12.

⁵⁰⁸ Dodd E. , 2004, pp. 158-179

⁵⁰⁹ Immerzeel M. , 2009, p. 89

⁵¹⁰ Snelders & Immerzeel, 2012-2013, pp. 79,106

⁵¹¹ Rey E. , 1895, p. 413

Nasr's drawing has an image of the Madonna and Child rather than any donor figures. In addition, there are traces of a baptism scene that can be seen over the image.

Upon further analysis of the inscription located near the donor, a different interpretation has been discovered, which leads to uncertainty regarding the name of the donor. It cannot be confirmed that the supplicant was named Philip; however, it is also not impossible. If the supplicant was indeed named Philip, then it could be inferred that he intended to make an offering to a saint who shared the same name. The absence of any Latin indication or inscription causes us to hesitate to propose a Latin identification for this site. The Byzantine tradition is well represented in the church through the iconographic programme and the presence of saints like Saint Phocas and Saint Simeon the Stylite. Add to this the fact that the inscriptions are all in Greek. The possibility that the donor was a Latin noble, as evidenced by his clean-shaven appearance, would reinforce the idea that the Franks had embraced the Byzantine and eastern customs and had no reservations about presenting a gift to a local church, potentially Orthodox, and being depicted there.⁵¹²

As part of the preparation for this thesis the church was thoroughly documented using the photogrammetry method. A total of 500 high-quality pictures were taken for the inside of the chapel. As the church is situated in a densely populated area, capturing drone footage of the outer shell proved to be a challenging task, resulting in only 100 pictures being taken with the traveller drone. The model required continuous refinement and recalculations in order to achieve an improved resolution. Following the collection of all the required information on-site, the methodology above was applied to produce a 3D model. The 3D generated model, which is an accurate representation of the church, has the potential to be used for future analysis and or interventions.

The other church of the village which also certainly dates to the Middle Ages is the church of St. George. It was built on the site of a Melkite church that was constructed on the site of a pagan temple.⁵¹³ The capacity of the church is approximately 250 persons, and it has a typical basilica plan, the traditional Levantine Romanesque Basilica.⁵¹⁴ Built from antique spolia, it is a twelfth-century crusader foundation. It might have been the main

⁵¹² H elou, 2019, pp. 233-245

⁵¹³ Nordiguian & Voisin, 1999, p. 365

⁵¹⁴ Nordiguian L. , 2011, pp. 7-19; H elou, 2003, p. 399

church of the Latins affiliated with the domain of the lords of the Bismiddīn region, known today as Bismizzīn. During the Frankish rule, Amyūn was situated within the domain of the lords, to the north of the already mentioned town.⁵¹⁵

Its plan is basilican, featuring a semi-circular central apse that projects on the exterior. While the lower side aisles are covered with cross-vaults, the central nave is covered with a magnificent barrel vault that dominates the space. Triple-arched arcades supported on solid rectangular pillars separate the nave from the aisles. These pillars are mainly built with large reused antique blocks. A detailed examination of the structure reveals that the pillars on the western side are bonded with the west wall, while those on the eastern side partially obscure two medieval columns where they meet the edges of the apse.

The apse has been constructed using blocks taken from an ancient monument, possibly a Roman temple. We can find large stones of considerable size that have been used mainly in the lower courses of the walls, particularly on the southern side of the church. The apse wall undoubtedly dates from the Middle Ages. As with the exterior cladding, it is built with medium-sized reused blocks. Starting from the apsidal hemicycle, and after having marked a recess, this moulding continues above two capitals set on the top of two columns flanking the two edges of the apse.

The window, which is framed with recent materials, perfectly represents the Crusader architectural tradition. Similar examples can be seen in various places, including Saint-Catherine in 'Anfah, and at Saint-Savior in Qubba. After thorough analysis, it has been determined that the apsidal wall, which is accompanied by two columns of undeniably Western inspiration, is the sole component of the edifice that dates back to the era of the Crusades. Three arches facing the north open up to the church's porch, which is formed by three crossing-vaulted bays and lined all along the north side.

⁵¹⁵ Immerzeel M. , 2009, p. 92; Dussaud, 1927, p. 78

Case study 8_ Qubba

The county of Tripoli must also have had some fortified villages and one of them might be Qubba. The Chronicle of the Templar of Tyre, reported that in 1279 “*Several brethren came on shore, to fortified village of the prince’s, called Dome*”, when the treaty between him and the prince came to an end, the master of the Temple had 13 galleys armed and sent them to Gibelet and many brothers went on board; they went to a strong village (*un fort cazau*) of the prince called Dome, and they fought with the knights of the prince and defeated them and several of them were killed (*et en ot aucuns mors*). It is not quite clear whether the casualties were Templars, or knights of the prince, or both.⁵¹⁶

This place is very likely the village of Qubba. ‘Dome’ is the French translation of the Arabic name Qubba, where a small Greek Orthodox village stands at the base of the plateau of Ḥāmāt. On the eastern end of the present-day village, a small church dedicated to the Holy Saviour is situated, dating to the twelfth century.⁵¹⁷ Isolated on a hill, with a beautiful view of the Nahr al-Jawz, this place is located nearly two kilometres North of Batrūn.

The architectural design of the church shows Latin influences, and this is evident in the door and window designs, as well as the barrel-vaulted rectangular shape of the single-nave church. Standing on the highest point of a natural hill provides excellent strategic advantages, making it a great location for fortification. With the exception of the apse, the vaults and the quoins, most of the church has been constructed using rough. The main entrance is from the western façade facing the apse oriented to the east. It also has a medieval cistern beside its northern wall. This chapel is very similar to the castle church of Margat Castle in Syria, dated to the end of the 1180s.⁵¹⁸

The overall dimensions of the structure are 12.10m, with a width of 5.45m, but it should be noted that these measurements do not include the depth of the apse. The apse's interior radius measures 2.15m, and its floor stands two steps higher than the nave's floor. The walls range between 1.00 and 1.39m thick. The inner height of the church is 7.00m, with a cornice starting at a height of 3.13m all around the church. The walls measure 7.71m in

⁵¹⁶Cronaca del Templare di Tiro, ed. Laura Minervini (Naples 2000), para. 163.1, p. 150.

⁵¹⁷ Coupel, 1941

⁵¹⁸ Major & Galambos, 2012

height. The apse is adorned with three niches, two of which are small and rectangular in shape, measuring 0.82 x 0.70m and located at a height of 0.40m above the apse floor. The third niche, located in the middle of the apse wall, is shaped like the larger window found on the southern wall and measures 2.10 x 1.14m; it is situated 0.92m above the apse floor, the window is placed at a depth of 0.60m from the inner surface of the wall.

The north and south walls of the church each have two small windows measuring 1.12 x 0.50 m. One bigger opening between the two small windows at the southern wall measures 2.16 x 1.25 m. Not only does the west portal offer a grand entrance, but there is also a side door situated in the north wall near the apse measuring 1.79 x 0.88 m. A small circular skylight, 0.85m in diameter, is now used as an additional source of light, but may originally have been intended for a bell with a small tower above, which was never built. It is placed at the key to the vault, specifically in the centre of the barrel-vault. Another circular window, 0.74 m in diameter, is placed above the main entrance.

At the north- western corner of the church, there is a door providing access from the nave a helicoidal stone staircase, with a diameter of 3.10m. This staircase could have been topped by a small dome and taken in a square tower of 2.73 x 2.88m, but currently, it is nothing more than a simple concrete slab. At the north-western corner of the church, there is a door that provides access from the nave to this staircase. Adjacent to the jutting out staircase tower leading to the roof located in front of the northern façade, there is a circular opening which leads to an underground room. The opening is approximately 0.66m high from the floor with a diameter of 0.46m. The oral depiction strongly suggests that the structure in question was a cistern, it is a rectangular shape space with a depth range of 5-6m.

As Coupel observed the western façade of the church appears to have once had a porch, which has since been lost.⁵¹⁹ The façade displays five stone corbels topped by square putlog holes and at its two ends three connecting courses, specifically designed to provide support the timber roof of the porch and the timber scaffolding used when constructing it. It is probable that the use of stones in neighbouring constructions, just like most of the churches, is the only reason for its disappearance. The addition of this porch has undoubtedly

⁵¹⁹ Coupel, 1941, p. 54

contributed greatly to the overall appearance and character of the building, while also holding much higher importance for the church itself.

Although the medieval wall painting has been mentioned, it is important to note that the architectural style of the church during the Middle Ages may not necessarily provide a precise indication of the denomination that used it. The possibility exists that either the local inhabitants or the sponsoring lord could have employed artists and architects to design the church or its decoration. Taking this into consideration, it is possible that non-Latins also used the church of Qubba, although it is more probable that the Latin population made use of it. But going back to the chronicle 1279, the prince had knights there, it may have been a Latin lordship, with Latins living there and some kind of residence, tower or castle, but no traces were found until now.

The Church was surveyed with drone footage in July 2020, using the "traveller drone" at an altitude of 10 meters, (**Fig. 146, Fig. 148 and Fig. 149**). With approximately 113 pictures the outer shell of the church was created and documented. The church is nowadays surrounded by newly built buildings which produced some challenges to fly with a drone. At that time the church was closed, no interior visit was possible. In June 2021 the second visit of the site was done after being in touch with the family that takes care of the church. Using the AF-S Nikkor 18-105mm lens in conjunction with the Nikon D7200 camera, a grand total of 1333 photos were taken to capture the church's interior and every single detail of it, (**Fig. 147**). The creation of an accurate 3D model, like the other study cases mentioned earlier, was made possible by employing the drone footage provided, GPS coordinates and additional measurements taken onsite from inside the church, all of which were necessary to ensure its accuracy.

Gathering this information is the first step towards creating a comprehensive 3D model of the church which will aid in the reconstruction of the missing porch that once stood in front of the main entrance. The accurate and detailed 2D documentation of the church was created in Autodesk AutoCAD by utilizing the collected information on site and the orthophoto that was captured from the 3D model.

Conclusion

Although the churches examined in this study do not provide sufficient evidence to establish definitive typologies, they do offer valuable insights into specific architectural and

functional characteristics unique to this region. These churches, particularly in the Tripoli area, reflect a long evolutionary process that began in the Middle Ages and in some cases even earlier. This evolution, marked by alterations, repairs and reconstructions, highlights the influence of both local economic factors and external restrictions, such as those imposed by the Mamluk and Ottoman periods, on the development of Christian places of worship.

The similarities between certain churches, such as St. George of Amyūn and St. George of Kafar ‘Akkā, reveal common architectural features with notable Western influences, although their spatial organisation differs. The double chapel of the Bkiftīn monastery is an important example of a broader architectural pattern in Lebanon, in which two naves are joined and structurally linked.⁵²⁰ Research suggests that in many cases, including Bkiftīn, the second apse is likely to have been a later addition, suggesting a continuous evolution in their structure.⁵²¹

The study of other double churches, such as St Antoine de Diddī, further supports the notion of a common trajectory of development among medieval chapels in Lebanon. These findings open new avenues for understanding the role of double chapels in the religious architecture of the region and underscore the need for further research to fully grasp their function and significance.

⁵²⁰ Dodd E. , 2004, pp. 22-28

⁵²¹ Nordiguian L. , 2011, pp. 38-48

9.3. Wall Paintings – a Unique Source.

While the architecture of these chapels may not provide much insight into their dating, the paintings that occasionally adorn them can offer some clues. Although Mount Lebanon has undergone numerous changes, developments, and periods of rupture and decline, its art has remained distinguished by an extraordinary attachment to the Byzantine tradition. For centuries, Constantinople was the primary hub of artistic activity and undoubtedly constituted the unique artistic capital for the majority of Christian communities in the East. Regardless of any geographical, political, or religious barriers, the Christians of Lebanon remained determined to stay in touch with the art of the empire while still holding to their deep-rooted attachment to the local Syrian tradition.

In the following section two particular questions about the frescoes found in northern Lebanese churches will be discussed: To what extent do the frescoes differ from one another? And to what extent can frescoes be considered useful in the process of defining the denominations of the church? Both the Latin presence in the East and the Syriac Renaissance played an integral role in influencing art during the 12th and 13th centuries. In the light of our research,⁵²² it can be inferred that wall painting in Lebanon, despite its many styles, is essentially either an eastern version of Byzantine painting or a western version of Syriac painting.

The categorization of these wall paintings has been a subject of debate among scholars, who have traditionally divided them into two groups: Byzantine style and a local Syrian style. The Byzantine style was influenced by various Byzantine artistic elements in the region and exhibited variations, whereas the "Syrian style" was identified by its preference for marked folds and contours, simplified palettes, and restrained colours, resulting in a more linear representation of figures. Although the paintings have been sorted into categories, it is important to recognize that these groupings do not fully represent the complex artistic relationships that played a part in their development.

When it comes to the Byzantine styles being used in Syria, many different styles are to be found, and what is particularly interesting is the significant overlap between these styles

⁵²² Immerzeel M. , 2009; Dodd E. C., 2004; H  lou, 2008; H  lou, 2007; H  lou, 2003; H  lou, 1999; H  lou, 2019, pp. 233-245

and the Syrian categories, which indicates that there were porous borders between these stylistic groups. During this period, it is emphasized that Cyprus and the Syrian mainland had a strong interconnectedness. This is due to the fact that Cyprus served as a crossroads of the Mediterranean and had significant economic contacts across the region. The focus was on the artistic exchange that occurred between Cyprus and the Syrian mainland, specifically in the region of wall and icon painting.

The late twelfth-century Crusader conquest and Frankish occupation of Cyprus established strong connections between the County of Tripoli and Cyprus, which can be linked to some murals in Lebanon and Syria. It appears that in these regions, there are a number of churches that showcase a style from the late twelfth century that is quite similar to the one found in Cyprus. Based on this, it can be inferred that Byzantine elements made their way to Greater Syria through both direct and indirect means, with the island serving as one of the possible indirect routes.

In his article, Matt Immerzeel delves into the topic of Cypriot influences in Syrian painting, specifically during the late Comnenian period as well as the early 13th century.⁵²³ By comparing Syrian murals and those found in Cypriot churches, the study brings attention to the similarities in style and iconography between the two. According to the author, there is a suggestion that painters from Cyprus could have played a role in decorating churches in Syria during this particular time period. In the article, two churches have been specifically mentioned as examples of churches that have murals that display a connection to Cypriot painting styles. These are Melkite Church of St Phocas in Amyūn and the Maronite Church of Mār Sābā in 'Iddih Batrūn. However, it is not clear whether the painting with Syriac inscription was used by the Jacobites or the Maronites. Immerzeel goes into great detail to investigate where the painters might have originated, ultimately suggesting that they were potentially Cypriots who were working in the County of Tripoli. To back up this theory, he provides a variety of evidence, such as stylistic, epigraphic, and iconographic evidence. In 1204, the Latins took Constantinople and that might have made orthodox painters remaining without order. As a result, Immerzeel believes that these painters had an influence on Syrian art, specifically the art of Kaftūn.⁵²⁴

⁵²³ Snelders & Immerzeel, 2012-2013

⁵²⁴ Immerzeel M. , 2009, pp. 83-101

9.3.1. Extent of Differences Between Medieval Frescoes.

Many factors contribute to the differences among frescoes dating from the medieval period. These factors include the unique artistic styles employed by different artists, the influence of various regions, the historical context in which the frescoes were created, as well as the specific intentions of the creators themselves. In order to comprehend the differences between medieval churches, it is essential to delve into the dissimilarities and similarities of the frescoes that adorn them. Hence, an exploration of these differences and the extent to which frescoes can be useful in defining the denominations of medieval churches is presented. Medieval frescoes can differ significantly in their artistic style, which is often influenced by the prevailing artistic trends of their time and place. To illustrate frescoes that date back to the early medieval period may exhibit certain characteristics that are dissimilar to those of the late medieval period.

The differentiation of frescoes can be significantly influenced by the geographical location of a medieval church and its regional influences. The variations seen in fresco art can be attributed to the impact of regional artistic traditions, cultural influences, and local iconographic preferences. Frescoes offer a wide range of subject matter options. The purpose of medieval frescoes varied greatly, with some being created to draw attention to biblical narratives, while others focused on the lives of saints, theological themes, or historical events. By analysing the selection of subjects, one can gain valuable insights into the religious and denominational affiliations of the church. The frescoes have the potential to depict the liturgical practices of a certain denomination. The use of sacramental imagery, such as the Eucharist or baptism, can offer an indication of a denomination's theological beliefs and traditions. Religious denominations often have their own set of iconographic symbols and motifs, which can vary greatly and require careful study to fully comprehend. As an example, certain Christian traditions are linked to the use of specific saints, angels, crosses, or religious emblems.

9.3.2. Usefulness in Defining Denominations.

To some extent, frescoes can be considered valuable in defining the denominations of medieval churches. When it comes to frescoes, the subjects and themes depicted are often in line with the theological and liturgical practices of a particular Christian denomination,

which is what is referred to as iconography. As an illustration, the denomination's traditions can be indicated by the presence of icons of particular saints, events from the life of Christ, or theological symbols.

Certain frescoes, like those depicting the Last Supper, baptism scenes, or the Virgin Mary, can provide insight into the liturgical practices and emphasis of a specific denomination based on their arrangement and prominence. The frescoes that are present in the artwork might contain inscriptions in different languages, and these inscriptions can be helpful in providing insights into the denomination. While Latin inscriptions are typically associated with Western Christianity, Greek inscriptions are more commonly found in Eastern Orthodox churches. Local tradition plays a vital role in fresco art and iconography, as it can be used to distinguish the denomination of the church based on regional variations.

Even though frescoes are significant, their value in determining the denomination of a medieval church must be seen within the broader context. To accurately determine the religious identity of a church, it is necessary to consider a wide range of factors, including but not limited to historical records, the church's historical affiliation, its architectural layout, and the religious practices of its members. After conducting our thorough study, we have come to the conclusion that Christianity had a wide reach in Lebanon. Due to this widespread influence, a plethora of churches with unique architectural typology were constructed, and these churches played a significant role in the history of Christian architecture in our area. Thus, we believe that it is imperative to conduct an in-depth analysis of this history.

9.3.3. Analysis of the churches in the studied region.

The churches, with their medieval frescoes from the Crusader period, are a particular feature of the region. These paintings, although badly damaged and largely destroyed, bear witness to the prosperity of the local Christian community. These churches were built in the area of the County of Tripoli, which stretched from the south of Byblos to the north of Tripoli and form a small percentage of the total number of churches found in the region. Out of 124 churches, 24 are characterised by the presence of frescoes, which is approximately 19.35%, but new discoveries can change this percentage at any time. The paintings usually cause a sensation both artistically and economically.

The region with the highest concentration of painted churches is Kūra, with 54.2% (13 out of 24) of the total, followed by Qādīshā with 29.2% (7 out of 24), then Batrūn with 16.67% (4 out of 24). **Table 1**

Many questions arise about the presence of frescoes in this particular region: who paid to paint the church? who painted the church? Can the frescoes tell us what denomination used the church? Why are there so many churches in the same region?

The village of Amyūn, studied in the previous subchapter, and in particular the church of St Phocas, whose frescoes are thought to have been financed by Philip of Ibelin, a member of the Frankish elite. Although the name Philip was common among the nobility, Philip of Ibelin is a prominent candidate for the sponsorship of the church of St Phocas. His involvement is suggested by the elaborate decoration and the association of the church with Frankish donors. In this case, the frescoes in the church of St Phocas appear to have been painted by Greek Orthodox painters, probably from Cyprus. This is suggested by the Byzantine style and iconography of the artwork. The presence of Latin inscriptions alongside Byzantine themes suggests that while the funding and commissioning was Western (possibly Frankish), the actual painting was done by artists familiar with Eastern Orthodox traditions.

The frescoes, which include depictions of Byzantine saints such as St Phocas and St Simeon the Stylite, as well as Greek inscriptions, suggest that the church was used by the Orthodox Christian community. Despite the possible involvement of Latin patrons, the style and content of the frescoes are in accordance with Eastern Orthodox traditions. The absence of Latin iconography or inscriptions further supports the idea that the church was primarily an Orthodox site. The high density of churches in the region may be due to a combination of factors. The historical significance of the area, its religious importance and the presence of influential lords probably contributed to the construction of many churches. The cultural and religious diversity of the region, coupled with the active sponsorship of both local and foreign elites, may have led to the establishment of numerous churches, each serving different denominational and community needs.

As for the Mār Marīnā cave, it is a sanctuary cave located about 120 metres above sea level on a cliff near Qalamūn, a site with a strategic view of the surrounding sea lanes. The cave, which is approximately 18.33 metres long, 7 metres high and 3.72 metres deep, is located about fifteen metres up the cliff face. Historically famous for its beautiful frescoes

and twelve icons depicting various episodes from the life of Saint Marina, the cave has suffered considerable deterioration. Historically, the cave was an important place of religious worship and possibly a place of pilgrimage. According to scientific analysis,⁵²⁵ the frescoes were probably commissioned by a Latin (Frankish) lord. This is suggested by the Latin inscriptions found on the frescoes. The frescoes were painted by an artist working in the Byzantine tradition. This can be seen from the stylistic elements of the paintings. The cave has historical links with the Maronite Church. It is also likely that the site was once linked to the nearby Cistercian Abbey of Belmont and could be that the monks painted it,⁵²⁶ which is now represented by the Greek Orthodox Monastery of Balamand. This suggests a historical continuity and possible influence between the Maronite and Orthodox traditions in the region.

Another example of a very rich region, not far from the borders of the region under study, is the region of Ma'ād. Mār Sharbil of Ma'ād, one of the most beautiful painted churches, was built on the site of a Roman church, using different elements from the older site. The church is a basilica type with a narthex and two side aisles. The church is the burial place of a girl named Hanneh, and her tomb-like structure can still be seen in the narthex.⁵²⁷ A translation of the girl's name is Anne, the baker's daughter. It is surprising that a baker would have had the means to bury his child in a church. It is even more surprising that he would have buried her in the narthex of a Maronite sanctuary. The church had a number of apostles and God painted on the apse and in the right room which should have been used as a sacristy there are paintings showing the death of the Virgin Mary which is a rare thing. This scene is usually painted above the tomb or the area where a very important person is buried. Next to the Virgin Mary a number of apostles and angels are painted and one person wearing Frankish coat, and the top of his head is freshly cut, this might be the father of the buried person. This makes the fact that a Frankish person was buried in this chapel most probably in this small room.

These examples of churches reflect a complex interplay of Latin, Maronite and Orthodox influences, with significant involvement from both local and foreign elites. The presence of frescoes, the blending of artistic traditions and the dense concentration of

⁵²⁵ Dodd E. C., 2004, pp. 293-297 Immerzeel M. , 2009, pp. 82-86

⁵²⁶ *Ibid* p.96

⁵²⁷ Nordiguian & Voisin, 1999, pp. 354-355

churches suggest that the region was a centre of religious, cultural and political activity during the Crusader period. These churches are tangible evidence of the region's rich and diverse Christian heritage, shaped by the collaboration of different communities and the sponsorship of donors.

10. THE MONASTIC LANDSCAPE

Monasticism plays a crucial role in the Oriental churches, serving as a spiritual foundation and preserving ancient Christian traditions. Lebanon's geography and mountains have always served as a refuge, an area of seclusion and relative safety, making it attractive to monks and hermits; it was also suitable for monastic landscapes, such as the valley of Wādī-Ḥulāt or Ḥadshīt.⁵²⁸ The Wādī-Ḥulāt is a ramification of the Qādīshā valley. The Qādīshā valley is composed of two valleys on the top Quzḥayā to the north and Qannūbīn to the south. These two valleys are united or joined at the so-called Mazra'at al-Nahr to form one watercourse. The Qādīshā valley, with its topography of deep valleys and cliffs, with an isolated region provided the valley with natural protection. Therefore, it is home to the largest concentration of hermitages, making it ideal for monastic life. The most fascinating aspect of the Qādīshā valley is the large number of historical and archaeological sites scattered throughout the region. Continuous human occupation of the valley from prehistory to the first half of the twentieth century has been demonstrated by archaeological research.

Various Christian communities mentioned in Chapter 4, such as the Melkites, who are Greek Orthodox, the Jacobites, the Syriacs, known as Syrian Orthodox, and the Maronites, left traces of their existence in this region. It is known that Ethiopians and Armenians also settled in the Qādīshā valley in the Middle Ages, fleeing religious persecution during the great military confrontations. During the Middle Ages, the Qādīshā valley played a prominent role in the religious history of the region, as it became the headquarters of the Maronite Church.

The classification of monasteries as settlements is a question that needs to be addressed. Although extensive research has been conducted on the matter, the question still lingers as to whether the monastic settlements were fully isolated or if there existed any civilian settlements on the plateau that contributed to their upkeep and food supply.

The villages found on the two sides of the Qādīshā valley, which are believed to be prosperous, played a crucial role in supplying food to the monasteries and have successfully preserved a large number of historical and archaeological sites, mainly of religious

⁵²⁸ Al-Duwayhī I. , 1951, p. 218

importance. In his account, al-Duwayhī mentions a number of villages that were devastated by the Mamlūkes.⁵²⁹ These are, in order, the villages of ʾIhdin, Bqūfā, Ḥaṣrūn, Kfar-Ṣārūn and Ḥadaṭ. Considering the route of the present road and replacing the villages on the periphery of Wādī Quḏhayyā and Wādī Qādīshā, whose existence is attested in the thirteenth century, we find that these villages are in the following order ʾIhdin, Bqūfā, Kfar-Sgāb, Bān, Ḥadshīt, Bsharrī, Bqurqāshā, Ḥaṣrūn, Kfar-Ṣārūn and Ḥadath, with Bsharrī at the head of the seignior with the existence of a castle of which there's no trace.

In each of these villages there is still trace of at least one church which date back to the studied period most of them listed in the Table 1, like for example Sayyidat al-Dārr, Mār Ya'qūb al-Muqaṭ ṭa', Mār Yūḥannā al-Ma' madān wa-Mār Tūmā located in the village of Ḥadshīt, Mār Quburyānus located in the village of Ḥadath etc.

The majority of the archaeological sites in the Qādīshā valley are located in natural caves situated in its upper region. A number of important cultural sites are preserved in the lower part of the valley, including villages, monasteries, churches, and mills. The valley accommodates approximately 35 monasteries, 6 hermitages, 3 villages within the valley, and 18 villages on the upper periphery, Map 4. Among these are the monastery of Our Lady of Bkiftūn, the church of Our Lady of the Fields, and the church of Saint Elias at Kfar Qaḥil.⁵³⁰ Monasteries, churches, tombs, hermitages, and necropolis, amounting to over 100 religious sites, are found in the upper section of the Qādīshā valley.

When it comes to building monasteries, higher walls are built with limestone, which provides them with the much-needed protection against erosion caused by water and wind, like the monastery of Saint Élysée (Dayr Mār Līsha') and the monastery of Mār Antonios Qūzayā. The Qādīshā is home to seven monasteries that are considered masterpieces.

Five of these monasteries are situated within the Qannūbīn valley. The Saint Elysée Monastery (Dayr Mār Līsha'), situated under the cliff that is located beneath the village of Bsharrī, the Maronite Church's birthplace of monastic life is this monastery. Scholars have mentioned that due to a restoration project that was carried out in the 1990s, the interior of

⁵²⁹ Al-Duwayhī I. , 1951, p. 146

⁵³⁰ Hélou, 2008, pp. 24-27,40-43

the monastery was changed beyond recognition from its original state.⁵³¹ This monastery is surrounded by several natural rock cavities, some of which have been used as hermitages.⁵³²

The Saint Asya Monastery (Dayr Mār 'Āsiyā), the Our Lady of Qannūbīn Monastery (Dayr Sayyidat Qannūbīn), is situated right in the middle of the valley. The location of this building is on the northern flank of the valley, and it stands in contrast to the village of Qannūbīn which is on the southern flank. To access the monastery, there are various footpaths available, including the western ascent from Our Lady of Ḥawqā monastery, the descent from Mār Līsha' monastery, and the downhill routes from the northern village of Blawzā or the southern village of Dīmān.

A church built into a cave, which is located west of the monastery, is considered to be the oldest part of the complex. The church has a single nave, with a central apse oriented towards the east, that is flanked by two lateral niches. The church's interior is known for its impressive wall paintings, which are often the subject of admiration. The monks of the monastery resided in two buildings, both of which were located towards the south and southeast of the church. The chapel of Mār Marīnā is located approximately 200 m west of the monastery, it hosts a cemetery for Maronite patriarchs.

The Mār 'Abūn Monastery (Dayr Mār Abūn) is situated on the southern flank of the Qannūbīn Valley. Either one of two footpaths can be taken to reach it, one leading from the village of Qannūbīn to the east and the other from the village of Fraydis to the west.⁵³³ The monastery comprises not only a building located on the hilltop but also three caves situated below it. The largest cave, which opens toward the east, is the church. Niches are found on both sides of the apse in the church. Towards the end of the thirteenth century, a priest who was living in the monastery had the opportunity to witness the forceful and violent encounters that occurred between the Mamluks and the residents of the village of Ḥawqa, which was located on the other side of the valley.⁵³⁴

⁵³¹ Chaaya A. , 2016, p. 124

⁵³² Baroudi F. , 1998, pp. 219-229

⁵³³ Abdul-Nour & Ghaouche, 1996, pp. 14-20

⁵³⁴ Baroudi, F., Khawaja, P. & Maroun, A., 1988, pp. 6-17; Baroudi F. , 1989, pp. 15-25; Salamé-Sarkis, , 1988, pp. 18-23

The Monastery of Saint Anthony the Great Quzḥaya (Dayr Mār Antūnius al-Kabīr Quzḥaya) tucked away in its serene surroundings. The monastery of Saint Anthony the Great Quzḥayā, which was founded centuries ago, can be found in a deep and narrow valley situated in the upper part of the Qādīshā valley.⁵³⁵ The Cave of Saint Anthony and the entrance to the monastery are located to the west, and visitors can reach them by ascending a long staircase between the cliff and the museum of the monastery. This entrance leads to a large terrace overlooking the Quzḥayā Valley, which shows its strategical position for different purposes. This is one of the monasteries in Lebanon where rural eremitism is still practised and cherished. According to oral tradition, the monastery of Saint Anthony the Great Quzḥayā is believed to be one of the oldest in the Qādīshā valley. It is said that Saint Hilarion founded the monastery in the fourth century, in honour of the Egyptian anchorite Saint Anthony the Great.⁵³⁶ The scarcity of historical data about the monastery makes it a challenging task to gather any information. Historical evidence suggests that the cave of Saint Anthony was the site of the first religious settlement. This is supported by the fact that three altars were constructed in 663, each dedicated to the Virgin Mary, the archangel Michael, and Saint Anthony. The monastery is mentioned in the records during 1000, 1154, and 1179.⁵³⁷

As most of the Eastern churches are dominated by the monastic type, this place offered ideal conditions for monastic life and had a large number of establishments. Hence, a great number of sites like grottoes, monastic caves, monasteries, and chapels that represent different types, (single-nave or double nave), and sometimes they still preserve the traces of their original wall paintings, dating back to the twelfth or thirteenth centuries.⁵³⁸

The densest sub-regions are the side valley of the so-called Hadshīt valley or Wādī al-Hulāt, **Map 4** where no less than 10 of these monastic establishments were identified hitherto⁵³⁹. A few of these found hermitages and old monasteries are Dayr al-Ṣalīb, Mār Antonios, Mār Silwān, Mār Sarkīs, Mār Bahnām, etc... **Fig. 161** and **Fig. 162**.

Lastly, perched dramatically on the cliffs, and seemingly suspended in time, is the Monastery of Our Lady of Hamatoura (Saydit Ḥamatūrā), which can be found after the

⁵³⁵ Moqel, 2000, p. 21; Asmar, 2010–2011, pp. 30-96

⁵³⁶ *Ibid*, 7-15; *Ibid*, 32

⁵³⁷ *Ibid*

⁵³⁸ GERSL journal *Liban Souterrain* 1,2 and 3.

⁵³⁹ [Hermitages - Qadisha Valley | GERSL : Speleology : Lebanon \(cavinglebanon.com\)](http://www.cavinglebanon.com)

Qannūbīn and Quẓḥayā valleys merge back together along the course of the Qādīshā river. Located at the entrance of the main road towards the valley, opposite to the village of Kuṣḥbā and has a wide view over the Kūrā plain. The village of Rāṣkīfā has cliffs that overlook the Qādīshā valley, and from the bottom of this valley, there is a steep footpath that leads up to the monastery. An old mill and a medieval bridge that gracefully arches over the Qādīshā river is present.⁵⁴⁰ The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Mount Lebanon is the rightful owner of the monastery of Our Lady of Ḥamatūrā. Since the medieval period, the layout and landscape of both the monastery and its surrounding lands have remained unchanged.

According to the records, the ownership of several plots near the river was established as belonging to the Orthodox Church of the Holy House, which is a *waqf* or religious foundation of the Jerusalem Patriarchate of the Holy Land, and also to the *waqf* of Sainte Catherine's Monastery in Mount Sinai. The church underwent restoration work after a fire damaged its interior. As a result of this, it was discovered that there were wall paintings hidden beneath numerous layers of old plaster. The paintings, just like the oldest parts of the monastery, have been dated to the thirteenth century.⁵⁴¹ The monasteries not only offer spiritual sanctuaries, but also represent historical and architectural treasures that showcase the region's abundant cultural heritage.

The number of inhabitants in each monastery is impossible to establish as not only the monastery buildings, but also the adjacent caves might have been used not only as storage facilities but also for housing hermits. Many of them did move to and fro from the monastery at certain times. It is also very likely that the mostly unmentioned medieval villages on the plateau above the valley lived in symbiosis with the numerous monastic establishments. They not only provided certain types of food for the high number of religious personnel beneath, but also accommodated visitors and pilgrims that must have contributed considerably to the village economy. It is no wonder that the mummified bodies and their numerous belongings discovered in the refuge cave of Asi al-Hadath speak of a seemingly well-to-do community.

⁵⁴⁰ Chaaya A. , 2016, pp. 142-145

⁵⁴¹ Hélou, 2008, pp. 51-56

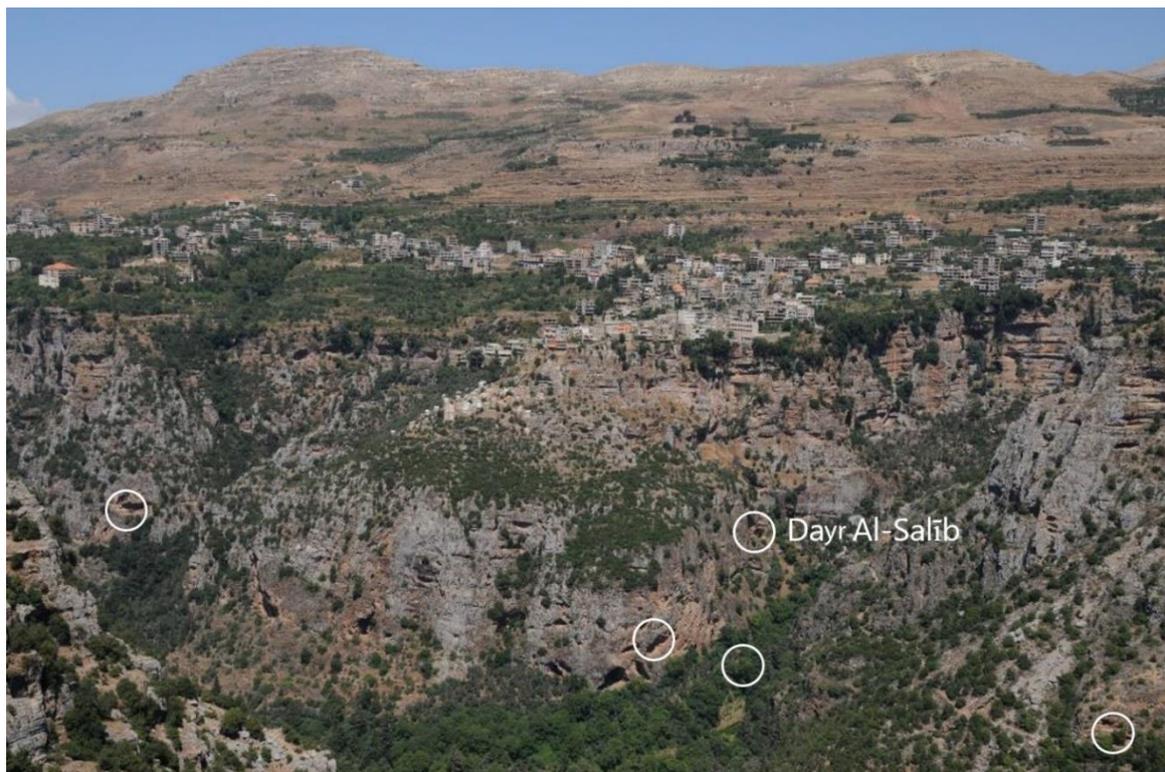


Fig. 83-Photo of Wādī al-Hulāt, Hadshīt, (Photo B. Major).

10.2. Case study 9 -Dayr al-Ṣalīb Monastery

The monastery of Dayr al-Ṣalīb is a place where hermits of different beliefs resided. It is located in a large cave in the middle of the rocky cliff of Wādī al-Hulāt, which is a secondary branch of the Qannūbīn valley, situated to the east of the village of Ḥadshīt. This location is also referred to as the Monastery of the Cross. From the main path of Wādī al-Hulāt, which connects Ḥadshīt to the Qannūbīn valley, a small passage ascends towards Dayr al-Ṣalīb.⁵⁴² The patriarch- historian Istifan al-Duwaihī notes that this site was a Jacobite monastery until the end of the 15th century.⁵⁴³

The monastery is a complex of buildings consisting of not only a church with two apses, but also four separate hermitages situated beneath the main cave of the monastery which measure a total of 20 x 16m.⁵⁴⁴ It can be inferred that the monks had established a

⁵⁴² Baroudi, Khawaja, & Maroun, 1989, p. 15; Sader Y. , 1997, p. 219

⁵⁴³ Al-Duwayhī I. , 1951, p. 208

⁵⁴⁴ Abdul Massih, Chaaya, & Hajj, 2013

living area around the cave, as evidenced by the discovery of storage areas and domestic spaces in the surrounding little caves. The accessibility to this area was through ropes leading to the main cave. The monastery entrance has been carved into the rock and it leads to the remains of a building that comprises of five rooms with well-maintained wall foundations. The presence of putlog holes drilled into the rock is a clear indication that this building had two stories and that there were once ceilings in place. There is a path that runs between the building and the edge of the terrace. This path leads to the church and a large open space that is located on the southern side of the building. In the west of this open space, there is a large arch.

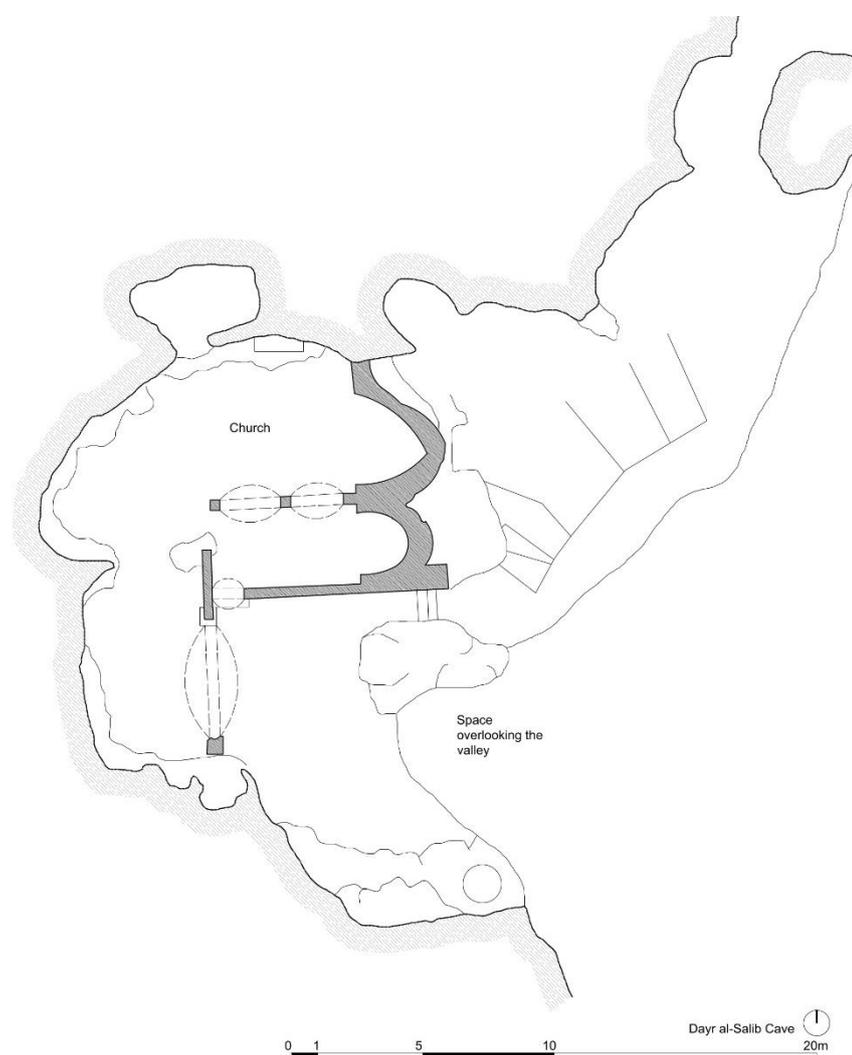


Fig. 84- Floor plan of Dayr al-Ṣalīb cave, Ḥadshīt, drawn by the author based on the publication of Anis Chaaya.

Under the monastery on the cliff, four cavities were found, But two of them were used for storage as can be seen from the carved depressions on their floor intended to hold ceramic jars in place or serving as cisterns. **(Fig. 113)** In the natural cave, the church was a single-nave and was later extended to become a double-nave.⁵⁴⁵ The semi-circular apses are oriented towards the east. The apses and the walls are built of mud bricks, only the bases of the walls, the pillars, and the arches were made of stones. The walls, show the remains of putlog holes to support the wooden ceiling covering the space and were covered by paintings, in a typical orthodox style.

Therefore, these frescoes date from the 12th and /or 13th centuries.⁵⁴⁶ The remain fresco at the entrance, shows Arabic inscriptions concerning the hermit on both sides of the doorway. Arabic, Syriac, and Greek inscriptions were found in this monastery. It is assumed that the large number of monastic caves offered accommodation for perhaps more than a dozen monks. The number of monks in certain larger monasteries surpasses the complete population of a medieval village, which results in the categorization of monasteries as a kind of settlement.

Crossing the extended path opposite to the one which led to Dayr al-Ṣalīb monastery, leads to Mār Sarkīs, Mār Bahnām, and Mār Shmūnī. The paintings of Mār Shmūnī church show the iconography of Byzantine traditions dating from the 13th century, completed in a local Syriac style particular to Syria and Lebanon. The church measuring 8 x 6m, was dedicated to the most popular figure of the Syriac churches. Originally the church is integrated into the rock cavity, it is possible that it was used as a funerary chamber.⁵⁴⁷ Two arches separated the cave from a double apse added at a later stage. This extension could be a result of the initial cave acquiring its sanctity after being sanctified by the remains of a monk, whose followers built the church later. The frescoes on the walls were destroyed in 1980, but fortunately, a few photographs were taken before that happened. These pictures

⁵⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 2013, pp.148-193

⁵⁴⁶ Abi Aoun, Baroudi, & Maroun , 1998; Abdul-Nour & Kallab, 1989, p. 44; Baroudi, Khawaja, & Maroun, 1989; Badwy, 2000, p. 6; Badwy , 2013, pp. 81-82,86,88,96-97; Chéhab, 1996, p. 124; Hélou, 2008, p. 21; Hélou, 2024-2025, pp. 98-134; Sader Y. , 1997, pp. 207,217-236 Sauma, 2003, pp. 315-316; Chaaya & Charaf, 2002, p. 52; Skeels & Skeels, 2001, pp. 263-269; Immerzeel M. , 2000, p. 7; Rousseau, 1998, pp. 18-24

⁵⁴⁷ Dodd E. , 1982, pp. 451-462.

provide a deep understanding to the significance of the frescoes and just how important they were.

A concise exposition of the frescoes highlighting their significance, as well as the intricacies of their technique and interpretation. The use of white lines to draw Satan in these pictures creates a striking effect where he appears transparent and only the outline can be seen. He is revealed as a human bound by chains because this was the time when Jesus rising from the Tomb. The conclusion we can draw from this is that the victory in the battle belongs to someone other than Satan.

A closer look at the painting reveals a figure without a beard and wearing a coat of chain mail, a reference to the Frankish military dress that was common at the time. Although this image is unique, it must be emphasised that it does not correspond to the standard appearance of a medieval knight. It has been suggested that he may have been a donor, but the fact that he was asleep makes this unlikely. The circumstances suggest that he was most likely one of the Roman soldiers responsible for guarding Christ's tomb and fell asleep unintentionally. The reason he was depicted in medieval style, wearing chain mail and wielding a straight sword, is because the nearby military elite set the standard, so it was a natural choice. The question of whether they were of Latin or Oriental origin may never be resolved. The military garments of the Crusader knights clearly show the influence of the artist, which is not surprising given that they were in control of the region for two centuries.

The second young individual depicted in the painting, who is kneeling in the posture of a supplicant, is the donor of the work of art. He is portrayed with a yellow halo encircling his head, which is a typical symbol of sanctity often associated with saints, indicating that he is a righteous individual. The donor in the painting is positioned separately from the depiction of hell and is instead portrayed on a yellow background as part of the Resurrection scene. In contrast, the knight in the painting is positioned within the Hell scene. Although the paintings did not cover the entirety of the walls in the church, they were still considered an integral part of the overall decor. A remarkable feature of the northern apse is the Resurrection scene which completely covers its vault. The wall under the vault of the third

apse to the south had three saints' upper figures that were still present. It seemed that the middle apse did not show any fresco or any painting.⁵⁴⁸

In addition to being inspired by the Byzantine tradition of the 13th century, the paintings inside the Mār Shmūnī church also feature a distinct Syrian style that is commonly found in many of the Medieval churches throughout Lebanon and Syria.



Fig. 85-Picture of the frescoes that existed in Mār Shmūnī church (photo: GERSL)

⁵⁴⁸ [mart-shmuni.pdf \(cavinglebanon.com\)](#)

Table 1- Table showing all the churches of the region.

| Regions | Village Name | Villages Arabic Name | Latin Name | Arabic Name | Actual Community | Coordinates N | Coordinates E | Presence of Fresco |
|---------|--------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Akkar | 1 | Gibbehar | Notre Dame | Saydit Ghazna | Maronite | 34°33'13.45"N | 36°14'18.95"E | |
| | 2 | Gibbehar | Saint Simson | Mar Sim'on | Maronite | 34°33'37.86"N | 36°18'40.96"E | |
| | 3 | Andeket | Saint Eilan | Mar Elias | Maronite | | | |
| | 4 | Andeket | Saint Elle | Mar Elias | Maronite | | | |
| | 5 | Andeket | Saint Saba | Mar Saba | Maronite | | | |
| | 6 | Beino | Saints Serge et Bacchus | Mar Sarkis wa Babhus | Maronite | 34°32'21.68"N | 36°10'27.22"E | |
| | 7 | Bezouna | Saints Serge-et-Paul | Mar Sarkis wa Babhus | Maronite | | | |
| | 8 | Qubayyat | Notre Dame Ghassit | Mar Sarkis wa Babhus | Grec Orthodox | | | |
| | 9 | Qubayyat | Notre Dame Ghassit | Saydit al-Ghassit | Grec Orthodox | | | |
| | 10 | Qubayyat | Notre Dame Kina | Saydit Kina | Maronite | | | |
| | 11 | Qubayyat | Notre Dame de Anan | Saydit Anan | Maronite | 34°31'51.93"N | 36°17'15.57"E | |
| | 12 | Qubayyat | Saints Georges et Daniel | Mar Sarkis wa Babhus | Maronite | 34°31'51.05"N | 36°18'01.45"E | |
| | 13 | Shayran | Notre Dame de 'Araqa | Saydit 'Araqa | Maronite | 34°31'55.88"N | 36°31'11.84"E | |
| | 14 | Qatnan | chapele, olive pressore, chure | Saydit Qatnan | Grec Orthodox | | | |
| | 15 | Qria | Qria | Saydit Qria | | | | |
| | 16 | Fsaqin | Fsaqin | Mar Nuhra | | | | |
| | 17 | Choutia | Qasre Marie-Qesse Kleb | Mar Nuhra | | | | |
| | 18 | Choutia | Saint Georges et Daniel | Mar Jirjis w Daniel | | | | |
| | 19 | Ghozraia | neropole, individuel tomb | | | | | |
| | 20 | Ghozraia | Notre dame de Ghozraia | Saydit Ghazna | | | | |
| | 21 | Hilshan | Ain-Fsate-temple | | | | | |
| | 22 | Hilshan | Saint Chalhila -tomb | Mar Shalhila | | | | |
| | 23 | Hilshan | Saint Sarkis | Mar Sarkis | | | | |
| | 24 | Chambouq | Notre Dame de Qamma'a | Saydit Qamma'a | | | | |
| Qadisha | 25 | Becharre / Hadchit | Notre Dame | Saydit el-Darr | Maronite | 34°15'23.66"N | 35°59'51.47"E | • |
| | 26 | Becharre / Hadchit | Saint Jacques de l'instereis | Mar Yaqoub al-Mukata' | Maronite | 34°14'59.32"N | 35°59'56.07"E | |
| | 27 | Becharre / Hadchit | Saints Jean-Baptiste-et-Thomas | Mar Yonhanna al-Ma'amadan wa Mar Tuma | Maronite | | | |
| | 28 | Becharre / Hadchit | Couvent de la Croix | Darr al-Salb | Maronite | 34°17'16.77"N | 35°57'52.57"E | • |
| | 29 | Hadchit | Sainte Salome | Mar Shumai | Maronite | 34°15'20.03"N | 35°59'10.69"E | • |
| | 30 | Hadchit | Monastere saint Georges l'etiopeen | Darr mar Jirjis al-Abhosh | Maronite | 34°14'55.67"N | 35°59'22.05"E | |
| | 31 | Hadchit | Monastere saint Jean | Darr Mar Yuhanna | | | | |
| | 32 | Hadchit | chapel saint Chalhila | Mahbasat Mar Shalhila | | | | |
| | 33 | Hadchit | Monastere saint Jean | Darr Mar Sarkis | | | | |
| | 34 | Hadchit | Chapel saint Jean | Mahbasat Mar Yuhanna | | | | |
| | 35 | Hadchit | Monastere saint Salwane | Darr Mar Salwan | | | | |
| | 36 | Hadchit | Monastere saint Antoine des bedwains | Darr Mar Antonius al-Bidwani | | | | |
| | 37 | Hadchit | Saint Bohann | Darr Mar Bohann | | | | |
| | 38 | Hadchit | Notre Dame | Mar Sarkis | | | | |
| | 39 | Hadchit | Saint Asion | Mar Sarkis | | | | |
| | 40 | Qomoubine / Haaroun | Saint Artemus | Mar Sarkis | | | | |
| | 41 | Qomoubine / Haaroun | Monastere de notre dame des veilleur | Darr Saydit al-Natur | Maronite | 34°25'11.80"N | 35°59'03.37"E | • |
| | 42 | Qnat | Notre Dame | Kanissi al-Sayyidat | Maronite | 34°24'04.50"N | 35°59'07.43"E | • |
| | 43 | Frache | Saint Artemus | Mar Sarkis | Maronite | 34°14'54.90"N | 35°58'04.79"E | • |
| | 44 | Qomoubine | Monastere de notre dame des veilleur | Mar Shalhila | Maronite | 34°14'49.50"N | 35°53'50.14"E | • |
| | 45 | Qomoubine | Notre dame de Chkef | Darr Saydit al-Natur | Maronite | 34°23'30.58"N | 35°44'16.71"E | |
| | 46 | Elden | Notre Dame de Chkef | Mar Sarkis | | 34°15'05.88"N | 35°53'27.77"E | |
| | 47 | Elden | Notre Dame et Notre Dame | Mar Sarkis | | 34°15'05.17"N | 35°53'07.97"E | |
| | 48 | Kfour el-Aarbi | Saint Dimitri et Saint Sarkis | Saydit Sikef al-Asariya | Maronite | | | |
| | 49 | Kfour el-Aarbi | Saint Dimitri et Saint Elle | Saydit wa Mar Sarkis | Grec Orthodox / Maronite | 34°13'24.43"N | 35°51'55.18"E | |
| 50 | Kfour el-Aarbi | Saint Simone-et-Serge | Mar Dumit wa Mar Elias | | | | | |
| 51 | Der Beila | Saint Boula | Saydit al Saqi | | | | | |
| 52 | Kafarhata (Koura) | Saint Mames | Mar Sinaan wa Mar Sarkis | Grec Orthodox | 34°13'32.98"N | 35°51'52.84"E | • | |
| 53 | Kafarhata (Zghara) | Notre Dame et Saint Sabas | Darr Boula | Maronite | 34°15'09.09"N | 35°49'19.67"E | | |
| 54 | Raskifa-Hamatoura | Notre-Dame de l'Assomption | Saydit wa Mar Saba | Grec Orthodox | 34°17'6.78"N | 35°44'46.31"E | | |
| 55 | Qaywir | Saint Dounit | Notre-Dame de l'Assomption | Maronite / Grec Orthodox | 34°22'59.77"N | 35°53'57.61"E | | |
| Barran | 56 | Bolsmaya | Saint Dounit | Mar Dumit | Maronite (ruined) | 34°16'30.09"N | 35°53'51.77"E | |
| | 57 | Bolsmaya | Notre Dame des Seins | Saydit al- Bzaz | Maronite | 34°15'6.54"N | 35°45'57.02"E | |
| | 58 | Bechaeh | Saint Simson et Notre Dame | Mar Sim'on wa al-Saydit | Maronite | 34°15'6.33"N | 35°45'57.07"E | |
| | 59 | Douna | Saint Dounit | Mar Dumit | Grec Orthodox | 34°15'11.20"N | 35°49'23.39"E | |
| | 60 | Douna | Saint Jean et Notre Dame | Mar Yuhanna wa al- Saydit | Grec Orthodox | 34°13'10.30"N | 35°50'4.33"E | |
| | 61 | Hammouch | Saint Nuhra | Mar Nuhra | Grec Orthodox | 34°11'48.93"N | 35°50'25.01"E | |
| | 62 | Hardine | Anonymous | Mar Nuhra | Maronite (archeological site) | 34°17'58.89"N | 35°40'26.72"E | |
| | 63 | Hardine | Saint Etienne | Mar 'Istifan | Maronite | 34°14'18.63"N | 35°50'27.41"E | |
| | 64 | Hardine | Saint Artemus | Mar Shalhila | Maronite | 34°14'20.84"N | 35°51'34.62"E | |
| | 65 | Hardine | Saints Lucias | Mar Nuhra | Maronite | 34°14'20.84"N | 35°51'34.62"E | |
| | 66 | Hardine | Saints Phocas-et-Georges | Mar Fawqa wa Mar Jirjis | Maronite | 34°13'56.29"N | 35°51'49.17"E | |
| | 67 | Hardine | Saints Georges-et-Isidore | Mar Jirjis wa Idna | Maronite | 34°14'12.34"N | 35°51'32.77"E | |
| | | | | Saint Jean | Mar Yuhanna al-Sha'ef | Maronite | 34°14'29.36"N | 35°50'55.75"E |

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------|---------------------|--------------------|--|--|----------------|---------------|---|
| 68 | Hamat | Hamat | Saint Gerges | Mar Jirjis | 34°12'13.67"N | 35°42'21.94"E | • |
| 69 | Jrbaia | Jrbaia | Saints Abda-et-Chalitia | Mar 'Abda wa Shalitia | | | |
| 70 | Kfar Hilda | Kfar Hilda | Saint Pierre | Mar Butrus | | | |
| 71 | Kfar Hilda | Kfar Hilda | Notre-Dame-des-Ruines | Saydih al-Kharayib | 34°13'29.22"N | 35°50'56.45"E | • |
| 72 | Rashkida | Rashkida | Saint Georges | Mar Jirjis | 34°15'46.21"N | 35°43'3.70"E | • |
| 73 | Rashkida | Rashkida | Saint Georges annexe | Mar Jirjis annexe | 34°15'45.99"N | 35°43'4.15"E | • |
| 74 | Kfarhay | Kfar Hay | Saint Saba | Mar Saba | 34°14'57.29"N | 35°44'36.66"E | • |
| 75 | Sghar | Sghar | Sainte Sophie et Saint Etienne | Mar Safia wa Istifan | 34°12'2.67"N | 35°41'46.31"E | • |
| 76 | Sghar | Sghar | Notre Dame du Quatine | Saydih al-Qatim | 34°11'40.03"N | 35°42'23.83"E | • |
| 77 | Smar Jbeil | Smr Jubayl | Notre dame des sauveurs | Saydih al-Khalas | | | |
| 78 | Smr Jbeil | Smr Jubayl | Saints Basile-et-Lucas | Mar Basilius wa Nuhra | 34°13'5.95"N | 35°41'27.05"E | • |
| 79 | Tamrouine el-Fawaqa | Tamrouin al-Fawaqa | Saints Artemise-et-Georges | Mar Shalitia wa Mar Jirjis | 34°10'58.45"N | 35°54'46.82"E | • |
| 80 | Tamrouine | Tamrouin | St Georges | Ain al-Raha / Mar Jirjis | | | |
| 81 | Tamrouine el-Tahna | Tamrouin al-Tahna | Notre Dame et Saint Antonios | Saydih wa Mar Mannus | 34°12'42.01"N | 35°52'55.94"E | • |
| 82 | Qubba | Qubba | Saint Sauveur | al-Mukhallis | | | |
| 83 | Feldah-Bairoun | Iddih - Bairoun | Saint Memmes | Mar Minna | 34°10'13.05"N | 35°41'19.13"E | • |
| 84 | Feldah-Bairoun | Iddih - Bairoun | Saint Saba | Mar Saba | 34°13'56.82"N | 35°41'38.75"E | • |
| Koura | | | | | | | |
| 85 | Barghoun | Barghoun | Saint Barbara | Mar Barbara | 34°34'37.1"N | 35°7'55.8"E | • |
| 86 | Enfeh | 'Anfah | Saint Catherine | Saydih Katrina | 34°2'13.134"N | 35°43'46.85"E | • |
| 87 | Enfeh | 'Anfah | Saint Jean Baptist | Mar Yuhanna al-Mamadnan monastery | 34°2'124.40"N | 35°44'6.83"E | • |
| 88 | Enfeh | 'Anfah | Our lady of wind | Saydih al-Rih | 34°2'13'6.90"N | 35°43'49.15"E | • |
| 89 | Enfeh | 'Anfah | Saint Simkon et Archange Michel | Mar Sim'an wa Mikha'il | | | |
| 90 | Enfeh | 'Anfah | Notre dame des veilleurs | Saydih al-Natur | 34°2'13'0.92"N | 35°43'46.53"E | • |
| 91 | Ain Ikriine | Ain 'Ikriin | Saint Edina | Mar 'Idna | | | |
| 92 | Arroun | 'Aryoun | Saint Phocas Church | Mar Fouqa | 34°17'46.10"N | 35°48'3.06"E | • |
| 93 | Arroun | 'Aryoun | Saint Georges | Mar Jirjis | | | |
| 94 | Batrounine | Batrounin | Notre Dame | al-Saydih | | | |
| 95 | Babbouche | Babush | Notre dame de la tele | Saydih al-Ras | 34°16'21.56"N | 35°50'54.11"E | • |
| 96 | Bnehan | Bnhan | Saint Pierre | Mar Butrus | | | |
| 97 | Bsarma | Bsarma | notre dame | Saydih al-Haqit | 34°19'57.36"N | 35°50'20.76"E | • |
| 98 | Bsarma | Bsarma | Saint Georges | Mar Jirjis | 34°17'25.8"N | 35°54'49.4"E | • |
| 99 | Bziza | Bziza | Saint Elias | Mar 'Ilias | | | |
| 100 | Bziza | Bziza | Notre dame du fleuve | Saydih al- Nahir | | | |
| 101 | Bziza | Bziza | Notre Dame des Colombes | Saydih al- 'Awamid | 34°16'11.79"N | 35°49'17.56"E | • |
| 102 | Daddeh | Diddih | Saint Antonios | Mar Mannus | | | |
| 103 | Daddeh | Diddih | Saint Jacques de l'intercis-et-Archange Michel | Mar Yaacub al-Mkani' wa Rafis al mala'ika Mikha'il | 34°2'342.22"N | 35°48'51.79"E | • |
| 104 | Bkefline | Bkifin | Notre dame | Dayr al-Saydat | 34°2'255.22"N | 35°51'41.80"E | • |
| 105 | Bkefline | Bkifin | Saint Elias de riviere | Mar 'Ilias | | | |
| 106 | Kafir hazir | Kafirhazir | Saint Theodore | Mar Tadris | 34°18'38.19"N | 35°46'37.11"E | • |
| 107 | Kfarhazir | KafirHazir | Notre dame des dormants | Saydih | | | |
| 108 | Kfaracha | Kafir'akka | Saint Georges | Mar Jirjis | | | |
| 109 | Kfaracha | Kafir'akka | Saint Nuhra | Mar Nuhra | | | |
| 110 | Qubbat | Qubbat | Notre dame de balmand | Dayr Balmand | 34°13'56.82"N | 35°41'38.75"E | • |
| 111 | Kafir Qheil | Kafirkheil | Saint Elias | Mar 'Ilias | | | |
| 112 | Kousba | Kusba | Saint Joseph | Mar Yusuf | | | |
| 113 | Kousba | Kusba | Saint Barbara | Saydih Barbara | | | |
| 114 | Kousba | Kusba | Saints Dimitri-et-Nicolas | Mar Dimitrios wa Nkula | 34°17'41.22"N | 35°50'45.50"E | • |
| 115 | Kousba | Kusba | Nativite de Marie | Mflad al-Saydih | 34°18'6.33"N | 35°51'10.45"E | • |
| 116 | Kousba | Kusba | Saint Hamatoura | Saydih Hamatoura | 34°18'27.12"N | 35°51'46.86"E | • |
| 117 | Qilamoun | Qilamun | Saint Marina | Mar Marina | 34°23'27.56"N | 35°48'7.49"E | • |
| 118 | Rachalbbine | Rashalbbin | saint Domitian | Mar Domitian | | | |
| 119 | Rachalbbine | Rashalbbin | Saing Jaque | Mar Ya'qub | | | |
| 120 | Zakroun | Zakroun | saint serges et bacchus | Mar Sarkis wa Bakhus | | | |
| 121 | kafoun | Kafoun | Notre dame des dormants | Saydih | | | |
| 122 | kafoun | Kafoun | saint serges et bacchus | Mar Serjios wa Bakhus | 34°15'59.27"N | 35°46'7.08"E | • |
| Tripoli | | | | | | | |
| 123 | Tripoli | Tarabulus | Saint Jean du Mont Pelérin | Mar Yuhanna | 34°2'552.52"N | 35°50'35.95"E | • |
| 124 | Tripoli | Tarabulus | St Jacques des abyssine | Mar Jaqub | 34°17'14.07"N | 35°58'10.57"E | • |

Table 2- Medieval sites in North Lebanon

| Number of sites | Sites mentioned names | Transcription name | Mentioned Sites in Latin sources | Mentioned Sites by travellers or scholars | Found Sites | Site showing medieval presence | Not yet found sites | Potential sites |
|-----------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|---|-------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Keliam, Menjiz | Minjiz | • | • | • | • | | |
| 2 | Maraoneh | Maraoneh/Marashuh al Barj | • | • | • | • | | |
| 3 | Gilbassar | Jabal Akka | • | • | • | • | | |
| 4 | Gullin, Colze | Qullin, Qulze | • | • | • | • | | |
| 5 | Aybas | Aybas | • | • | • | • | | |
| 6 | Baham, Bahari | Baham | • | • | • | • | | |
| 7 | Almar, Almar | Almar | • | • | • | • | | |
| 8 | Almar, Akk | Almar | • | • | • | • | | |
| 9 | Bekestin | Bekstin | • | • | • | • | | • |
| 10 | Beharafi, Bocaratie | Beharafi | • | • | • | • | | • |
| 11 | Besmeidin, Besmezzem | Besmeidin | • | • | • | • | | |
| 12 | Misoleh | Misoleh | • | • | • | • | | |
| 13 | Tripoli | Tripoli | • | • | • | • | | |
| 14 | Bemessa, Ras Miska | Bemessa | • | • | • | • | | |
| 15 | Bevintar, Bekemra | Bevintar | • | • | • | • | | |
| 16 | Bevintar, Bekemra | Bevintar | • | • | • | • | | |
| 17 | Borin, Borina | Borin | • | • | • | • | | |
| 18 | Villa Russa | Villa Russa | • | • | • | • | | |
| 19 | Masraf, Kir haouch | Kir haouch | • | • | • | • | | |
| 20 | Andet | And et | • | • | • | • | | |
| 21 | Qohbyat | Qohbyat | • | • | • | • | | |
| 22 | Malmoudi, Mgdel | Majdel | • | • | • | • | | • |
| 23 | Syk, Chm | Syk | • | • | • | • | | |
| 24 | Mitroth, Madefehya | Mitroth | • | • | • | • | | • |
| 25 | Mitroth, Madefehya | Mitroth | • | • | • | • | | • |
| 26 | C-trahel, Kir hahel | Kir Kahil | • | • | • | • | | • |
| 27 | Aer, Dahr al-Ain | Dahr al-Ain | • | • | • | • | | • |
| 28 | Hayz | Hayz | • | • | • | • | | |
| 29 | Galimont, Qalamoun | Qalamoun | • | • | • | • | | |
| 30 | Belmont, Belmont | Belmont | • | • | • | • | | |
| 31 | Franc, Abba | Franc | • | • | • | • | | |
| 32 | Bevintar, Bekemra | Bevintar | • | • | • | • | | |
| 33 | Bevintar, Bekemra | Bevintar | • | • | • | • | | |
| 34 | Borin, Borina | Borin | • | • | • | • | | |
| 35 | Ceraphonic, Sir ed Danyz | Sir al-Danyyah | • | • | • | • | | • |
| 36 | Deric, Derraya | Derraya | • | • | • | • | | • |
| 37 | Berim, Beran | Berim | • | • | • | • | | |
| 38 | Ras Chappa | Ras Shikka | • | • | • | • | | |
| 39 | Le boy cou contestable | al-Masqaliba | • | • | • | • | | |
| 40 | Sir al-Danyz | Sir al-Danyyah | • | • | • | • | | |
| 41 | Sir al-Danyz | Sir al-Danyyah | • | • | • | • | | |
| 42 | Sir al-Danyz | Sir al-Danyyah | • | • | • | • | | |
| 43 | Bevintar, Bekemra | Bevintar | • | • | • | • | | |
| 44 | Adaline, Abaline | Abalin | • | • | • | • | | |
| 45 | Hubala, Bella | Billa | • | • | • | • | | • |
| 46 | Avilin, Harline | Harlin | • | • | • | • | | |
| 47 | Duana | Duana | • | • | • | • | | |
| 48 | Qahsere, Bekure | Bekura | • | • | • | • | | |
| 49 | Qahsere, Bekure | Bekura | • | • | • | • | | |
| 50 | Qahsere, Bekure | Bekura | • | • | • | • | | |
| 51 | Cava de Mambusa, el Mambusha | Qadiriya | • | • | • | • | | |
| 52 | Fyso | Fyso | • | • | • | • | | |
| 53 | Doyr Hillu courtyard house | Doyr Hillu | • | • | • | • | | |
| 54 | Borj Doyr Hillu | Borj Doyr Hillu | • | • | • | • | | |
| 55 | Kirabha | Borj al-Ayn | • | • | • | • | | |
| 56 | Kirabha | Kirab - Akk | • | • | • | • | | |
| 57 | Qahsere, Bekure | Qahsere | • | • | • | • | | |
| 58 | Tall Bihbi | Tall Bihbi | • | • | • | • | | |
| 59 | Tall Bihbi | Tall Bihbi | • | • | • | • | | |
| 60 | Tall Hahel | Tall Hahel | • | • | • | • | | |
| 61 | Tannourine | Tannourin | • | • | • | • | | |
| 62 | Tannourine el Hala | Tannourin | • | • | • | • | | |
| 63 | Tannourine el Fawq | Tannourin al-Fawq | • | • | • | • | | |
| 64 | Sghir | Sghir | • | • | • | • | | |
| 65 | Marj Chelid | Marj Chelid | • | • | • | • | | |
| 66 | Marj Chelid | Marj Chelid | • | • | • | • | | |
| 67 | Kifan | Kifan | • | • | • | • | | |
| 68 | Kir Hay | Kir Hay | • | • | • | • | | |
| 69 | Kir Chyman | Kir Chyman | • | • | • | • | | |
| 70 | Hamat | Hamat | • | • | • | • | | |
| 71 | Iddeh | Iddeh | • | • | • | • | | |
| 72 | Bokemaya | Bokemaya | • | • | • | • | | |
| 73 | Besmeidin | Besmeidin | • | • | • | • | | |
| 74 | Berina | Berina | • | • | • | • | | |
| 75 | Berina | Berina | • | • | • | • | | |
| 76 | Mimra | Mimra | • | • | • | • | | |
| 77 | Kifanoun | Kifanoun | • | • | • | • | | |
| 78 | Qhila | Qhila | • | • | • | • | | |
| 79 | Jesquine | Jesquine | • | • | • | • | | |
| 80 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 81 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 82 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 83 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 84 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 85 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 86 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 87 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 88 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 89 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 90 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 91 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 92 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 93 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 94 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 95 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 96 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 97 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 98 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 99 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |
| 100 | Chouira | Chouira | • | • | • | • | | |

Table 3- Typology of Churches in Kūra region

| | <i>Region</i> | <i>Name of the church</i> | <i>Single Nave</i> | <i>Double Nave</i> | <i>Triple Nave</i> | <i>Single Apse</i> | <i>Double Apse</i> | <i>Triple Apse</i> |
|----|---------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | ‘Ain ‘Ikrīn | St. ʾIdnā | • | | | • | | |
| 2 | Amyūn | St. George al-Dahlīz | | | • | • | | |
| 3 | Amyūn | St. Phocas | | | • | • | | |
| 4 | Barghūn | St. Barbara | • | | | • | | |
| 5 | Baḥbūsh | Our lady of al-Rass | • | | | • | | |
| 6 | Bkiftīn | Our lady of the Dormition & St. Geoge | | • | | | • | |
| 7 | Bkiftīn | St. Elias the river | • | | | • | | |
| 8 | Bsarma | Our Lady of the Wilderness | • | | | • | | |
| 9 | Bsarma | St. Georges | • | | | • | | |
| 10 | Bzīzā | Our Lady the River | • | | | • | | |
| 11 | Bzīzā | St. Elias | | • | | | • | |
| 12 | Bzīzā | Our Lady of columns | • | | | • | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|------------|----------------------------|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| 13 | Diddih | St. Anthony | | • | | | • | |
| 14 | Diddih | Saint Jacques and Micheal | | • | | | • | |
| 15 | Anfah | Our Lady of the Natūr | • | | | | • | |
| 16 | Anfah | Our Lady of the Wind | • | | | | • | |
| 17 | Anfah | St. John the Baptist | • | | | | • | |
| 18 | Anfah | St. Catherine | • | | | | • | |
| 19 | Anfah | St. Simon & Arch, Michael | • | | | | • | |
| 20 | Kaftūn | Our Lady of Dormition | • | | | | • | |
| 21 | Kaftūn | St. Sergius & St. Bacchus | | | | • | • | |
| 22 | Kafar‘Akkā | St. George | | | | • | | • |
| 23 | Kafar‘Akkā | St. Nohra | • | | | | • | |
| 24 | Kfar Ḥazīr | Our Lady of the Dormition | • | | | | • | |
| 25 | Kfar Ḥazīr | St. George & St. Theodoros | • | | | | • | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|---|--|---|---|---|
| 26 | Kfarkiḥl | St. Elias the River | • | | | • | | |
| 27 | Kusba | Our Lady of Hamatūra | • | | | • | | |
| 28 | Kusba | Our Lady of the Nativity | • | | | • | | |
| 29 | Kusba | St. Barbara | • | | | • | | |
| 30 | Kusba | St. Dimitrios &St. Nicholas | | • | | | • | |
| 31 | Kusba | St. Joseph | • | | | • | | |
| 32 | Qalamūn | St. Marina | Cavernous Church | | | | | |
| 33 | Qolḥāt | Our Lady of Balamand | • | | | • | | |
| 34 | Rashdibbīn | St. Domitian | • | | | • | | |
| 35 | Rashdibbīn | St. Jacob | • | | | • | | |
| 36 | Zakrūn | St. Sergious& St. Bacchus | • | | | • | | |
| 37 | Batrūmīn | Our lady | | | | • | | • |
| 38 | Bnihran | St. Peter | • | | | • | | |

Table 4- Typology of Churches in Batrūn

| | <i>Region</i> | <i>Name of the church</i> | <i>Single Nave</i> | <i>Double Nave</i> | <i>Triple Nave</i> | <i>Single Apse</i> | <i>Double Apse</i> | <i>Triple Apse</i> |
|----|---------------|---|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Bishi'li | St. Domitian | • | | | • | | |
| 2 | Buksmaya | Our Lady of Breast & St. Simon | | • | | | • | |
| 3 | Buksmaya | Our lady of breasts | • | | | • | | |
| 4 | Hannush | No name | • | | | • | | |
| 5 | Dūmā | St. John the Baptist & Our Lady of the Nativity | | • | | | • | |
| 6 | Dūmā | St. Nohra | • | | | • | | |
| 7 | Edde | St. Mammes | • | | | • | | |
| 8 | Edde | St. Sāba | | | • | • | | |
| 9 | Ḥamāt | St. Georges | • | | | • | | |
| 10 | Ḥardīn | St. Challita & St. Nohra | Cavernous Church | | | | | |
| 11 | Ḥardīn | St. Istifān (Stephen) | • | Stone carved church | | | • | |
| 12 | Ḥardīn | St. George & Edna | • | | | | • | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| 13 | Ḥardīn | Saint Lucius | • | | | • | | |
| 14 | Ḥardīn | St. Phocas & St. George | • | | | • | | |
| 15 | Ḥardīn | St. Theodoros | • | | | • | | |
| 16 | KfarḤay | St. Saba | • | | | • | | |
| 17 | KfarḤildā | Our Lady of al- Kharāyib | • | | | • | | |
| 18 | KfarḤildā | St. Peter | • | | | • | | |
| 19 | Jrabta | Our Lady of Abda and Challita | • | | | • | | |
| 20 | Qubba | St. Savior | • | | | • | | |
| 21 | Rāshkīdā-1 | St. George | | | • | • | | |
| 22 | Rāshkīdā-2 | St. George | | • | | | • | |
| 23 | Sghār | Archangel Michael | • | | | • | | |
| 24 | Sghār | St. Sophia & St. Stephen | | • | | | • | |
| 25 | Smār Jbail | Our Lady of the Help | • | | | • | | |
| 26 | Smār Jbail | Sts Basilios & Nohra | | • | | | • | |
| 27 | Tannūrīn al- Fawqa | St. Challita & St. George | | • | | | • | |
| 28 | Tannūrīn al- Taḥtā | Our Lady & St. Anthony | • | | | • | | |
| 29 | Tannūrīn | Ain al-Raha Fawqa/ st. George | • | | | • | | |

11. Conclusion

The study employs a scientific and academic methodology based on analysis and quantitative methods, as well as descriptive and comparative methods. It focuses on medieval rural settlements in North Lebanon during the 12th and 13th centuries. The following points are of particular significance:

The principal objective of this study is to identify the diverse 12th- and 13th-century settlements in North Lebanon. Following a comprehensive examination of written and earlier archaeological evidence, it has become apparent that the region is characterised by a high concentration of rural settlements dating back to the 12th and 13th centuries. The research findings suggest that, throughout history, the coastal areas have been identified as a favourable location for permanent settlement, while the mountains have been regarded as a safe and refuge place. Consequently, these regions have retained a significant number of valuable architectural remains from various historical periods, providing insights into the diverse cultural and religious influences that have shaped the region.

Secondly, the categorisation process was determined by two principal factors: theoretical (sources and travellers) and practical field surveys. Consequently, the four principal classifications can be defined as follows: fortified sites, rural towers, cave fortifications, villages, and monastic landscapes. The category of fortified sites encompasses both fortified strongpoints and lesser rural centres.

The archaeological record of medieval villages reveals that the more durable structures, such as churches and refuge caves, often survive to the present day. The cultural exchange between Crusaders and local inhabitants during the medieval era had a significant impact on the region's artistic, architectural, and social traditions.

North Lebanon has been shaped throughout its history by a diverse range of religious communities, including Maronites, Syriac, Orthodox, Sunni, Shī'ī, 'Alawī, and Druze. These different denominations prompted the study to seek guidance on the hitherto unknown events and sites dating back to the Crusader era.

Furthermore, the examination of multiple sites led to the discovery of remains believed to be from an undocumented medieval structure. The identification of a courtyard house during the field survey is a notable finding that has not been discussed by any scholars previously.

The identified architectural remains indicate the social and religious interactions between the villages and the monastic landscape. Towns serve as a social and economic conduit for the villages. The churches, towers, and fortified sites attest to the existence of a village, while the monasteries represent isolated hermitages that rely exclusively on the support of villages for sustenance.

This study examined the churches and their architectural typologies in the region with a view to ascertaining the percentage of churches present in the study area and the different denominations that could be attributed to a particular church **Table 1, Table 3, Table 4.**

Moreover, the study produced a map indicating the locations of the various settlements referenced in historical and scholarly sources, as illustrated in Map 3.

The study addresses a gap in the existing scholarly literature by providing a digital documentation of monuments that are difficult to document using traditional methods. The utilisation of contemporary technologies for three-dimensional documentation, including aerial and terrestrial photogrammetry, facilitated a comprehensive analysis of the examined monuments. The 3D model, generated as a result of the aforementioned methodology, provides a comprehensive understanding of the site in its current state of preservation, offering both 2D and 3D documentation. Additionally, two-dimensional plans and sections can be generated to facilitate the implementation of any restoration project. Furthermore, the 3D models made possible for the creation of a digital prototype for the periodisation purpose. The case study of Qulay‘āt castle provides evidence of the feasibility, adaptability and success of a digital workflow designed to integrate historical, architectural and digital data in order to gain insight into the phases and periods of construction.

The study further developed the digital process by creating a virtual historical reconstruction of Qulay‘āt castle, which can be replicated for the other case studies.

The studied sites are at risk of destruction due to illegal excavations and unlicensed construction activities. The 3D replicas offer the possibility of monitoring the condition of endangered sites through regular documentation, which can identify changes in the landscape and monuments. This could eventually result in the creation of a digital twin. In addition to offering valuable insight into the local area's growth, the digital twin, a virtual model designed to accurately reflect a physical object or an existing site, can be expanded

to provide an understanding of how it has transformed over time. Additionally, the tools of landscape archaeology can be used to identify unexplored monuments.

Subsequent research will apply the periodisation workflow to the remaining case studies. Additionally, a digital twin will be developed for these sites as a preliminary step towards monitoring restoration and dissemination.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Qulay'āt Castle

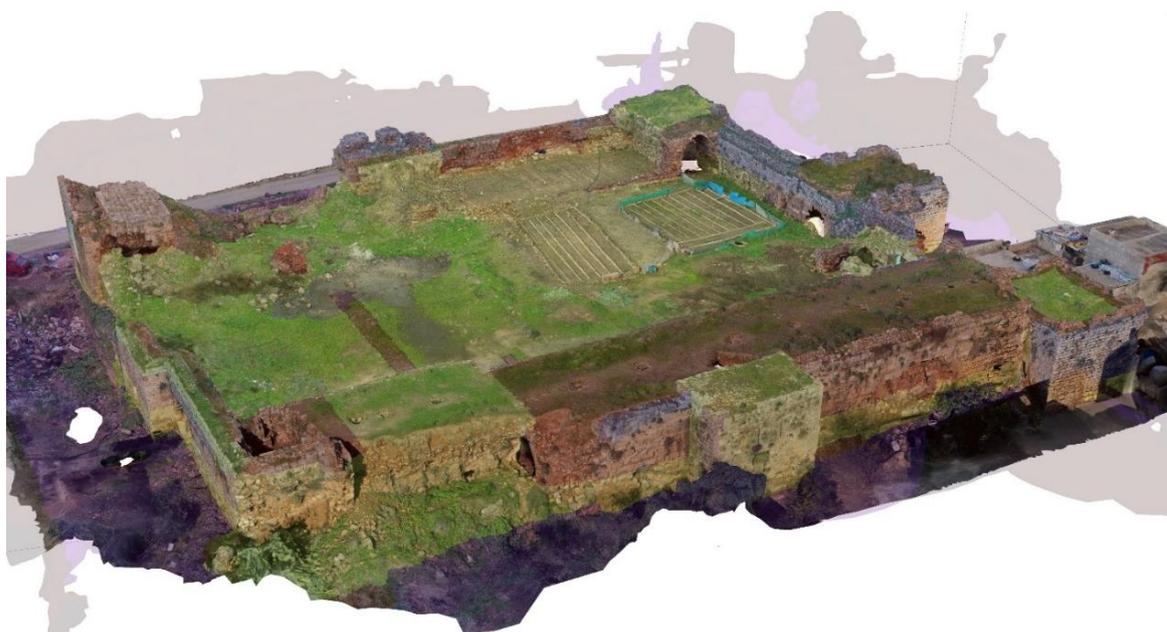


Fig. 86-3D showing the different colors of the periods in the castle.



Fig. 87-Reconstruction of the Qulay'āt castle done on Revit based on the generated point cloud.

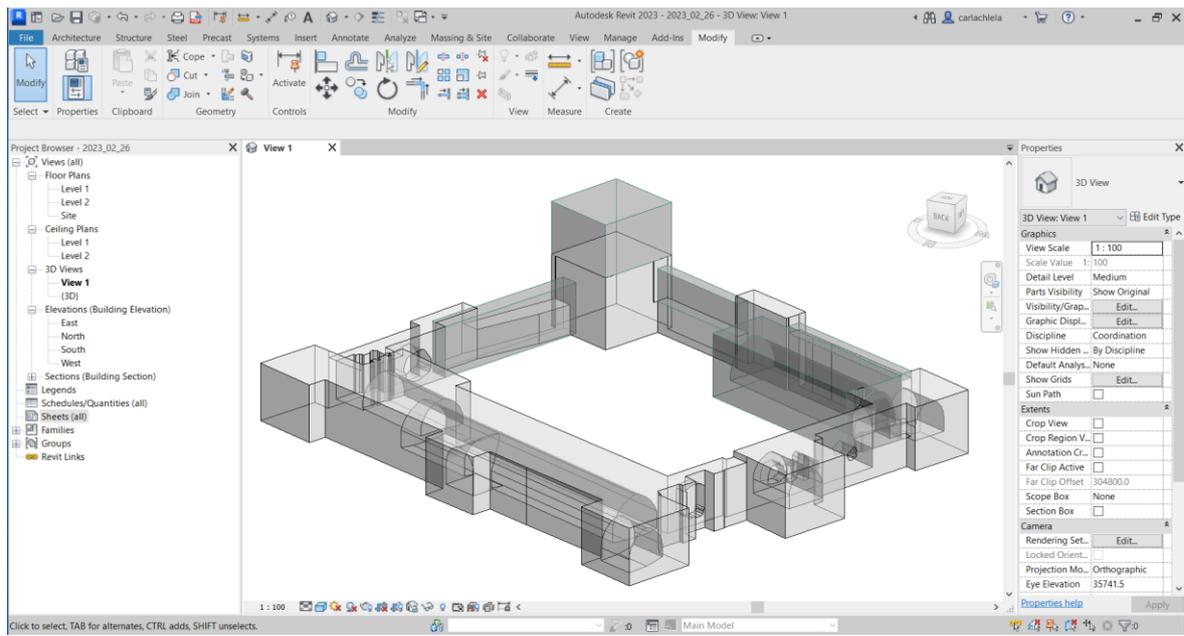


Fig. 88-Screenshot of the 3D reconstruction done on Autodesk Revit showing in light grey the existing structure and in dark grey the possible reconstruction based on earlier pictures.

Pictures of Menjez Castle



Fig. 89-Wall showing the different used Ashlars and the probable Roman Podium.



Fig. 90-Foundations of the southern castle wall constructed from Roman period spolia. (B. Major).



Fig. 91-Building b1 on an aerial photo from the south. (B. Takáts).



Fig. 92-The stables building b1.



Fig. 93-Interior of cistern no. 2 in the northern bailey of the castle. (B. Major).



Fig. 94-Gate G3 in the northern wall of the castle. (B. Major).



Fig. 95-Northwestern corner of the castle from the edge of the western trench with building b2 in the foreground. (B. Major).



Fig. 96-Western face of b2 with arrow slit remains. (B. Major).



Fig. 97-Inner courtyard of the castle as seen from the west with building b3 in the distance. (B. Major).



Fig. 98-The easternmost end of the castle with building b4 in the background and b5 in the foreground together with the opening of cistern no.1 in the left corner. (B. Major).

Pictures of Tibū Tower



Fig. 99-Tibū Tower ruins.

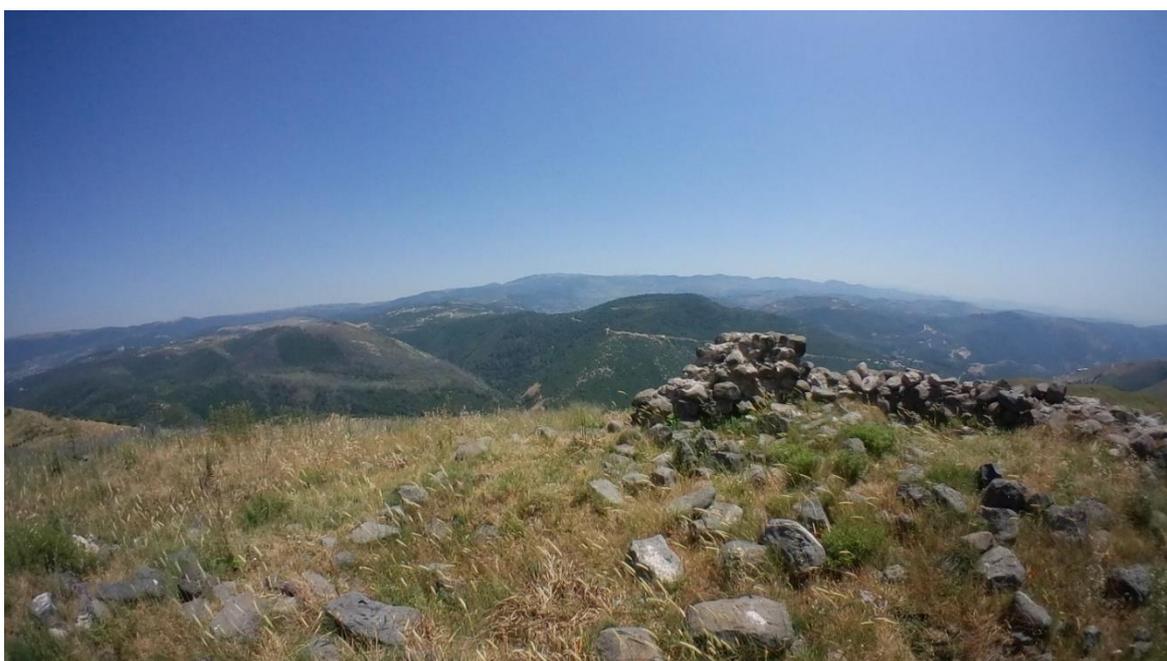


Fig. 100-Tibū Tower remaining wall stretch.



Fig. 101-Aerial photo of the remaining walls of the tower.



Fig. 102-Aerial photo showing the houses on the hill on a lower level than the tower.



Fig. 103-Top aerial photo showing the tower and the houses around it.



Fig. 104-Picture taken from the northern parallel hill showing the remains of houses.

Pictures of 'Akkār al-'Atīqā Castle



Fig. 105- 'Akkār al-'Atīqā castle and it's rabaḍ.



Fig. 106- 'Akkār al-'Atīqā castle castle's suburb.



Fig. 107-Vaulted space in the suburb of the castle.

Pictures of Churches

1- Amyūn: Saint Phocas



Fig. 108-Aerial Photo of Saint Phocas Church.

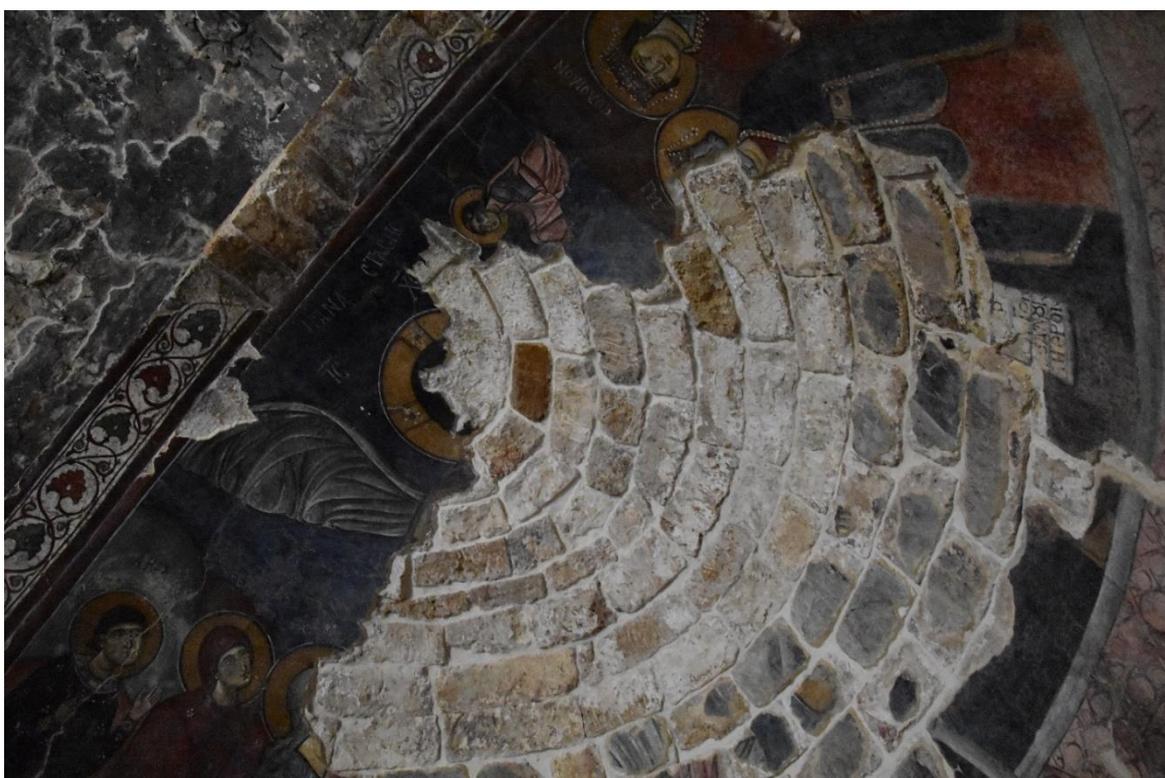


Fig. 109-Frescoes located at the apse of St. Phocas Church.

2- Deir al- Salīb monastery



Fig. 110-Hadshit Valley.



Fig. 111-Dayr al- Şalīb monastery, the two apses built with mode bricks.



Fig. 112-The frescoes remaining on the northern apse.

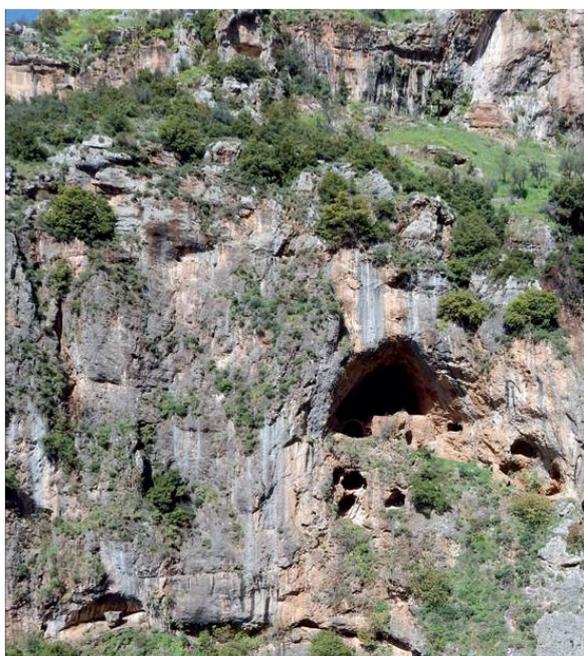


Fig. 113-Facade of the Dayr al- Şalīb monastery integrated in the rock cut and the hermitages grottoes under it.

Saint Marina Grotto



Fig. 114-Photo of the st Marina grotto showing the western facade.



Fig. 115-The remaining frescoes painted on the rock-cut.

Mayfūq cave



Fig. 116-Mayfūq cave' main facade.



Fig. 117- Interior space of the Mayfūq cave



Fig. 118_ Arrow Slit Corridor

3- Courtyard house



Fig. 119-Western facade of the courtyard house.



Fig. 120-Vaulted inner space of the courtyard house.



Fig. 121-Inner space showing the western inner wall.



Fig. 122-Northern facade having the main entrance of the space.

PLATES AND ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS.

1_ Menjez_ Felicium Castle

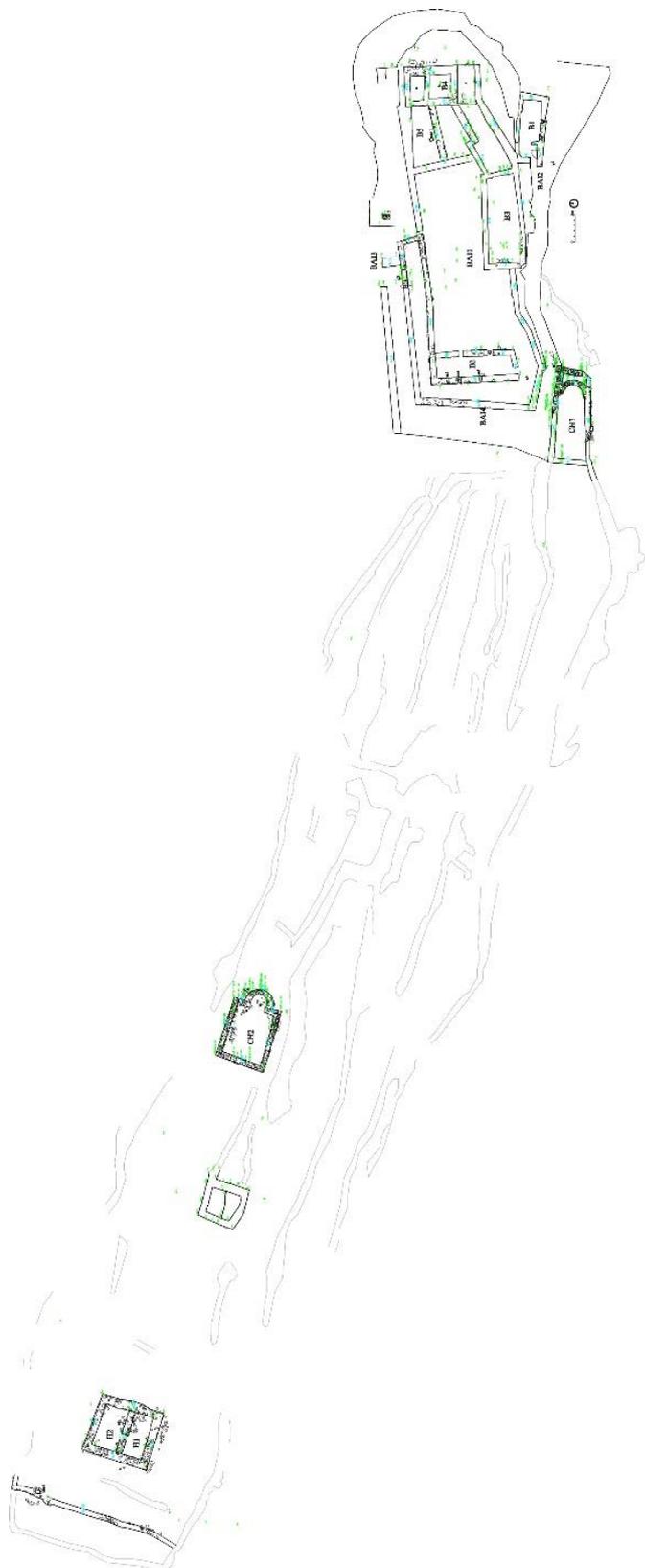


Fig. 123-Plan of Menjez Castle with the suburb.

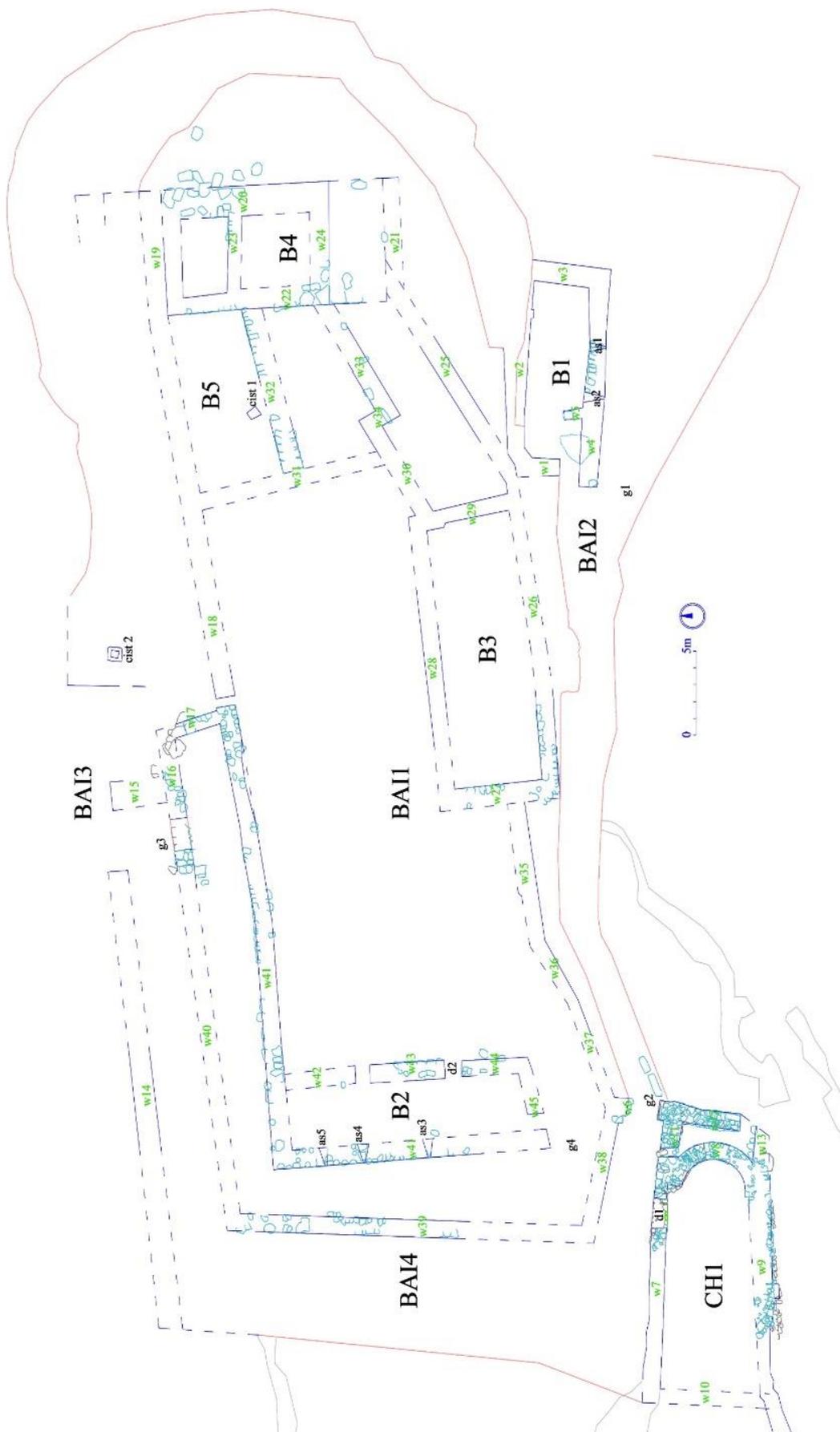


Fig. 124-The castle codification Plan.

2- Qulay'āt Castle

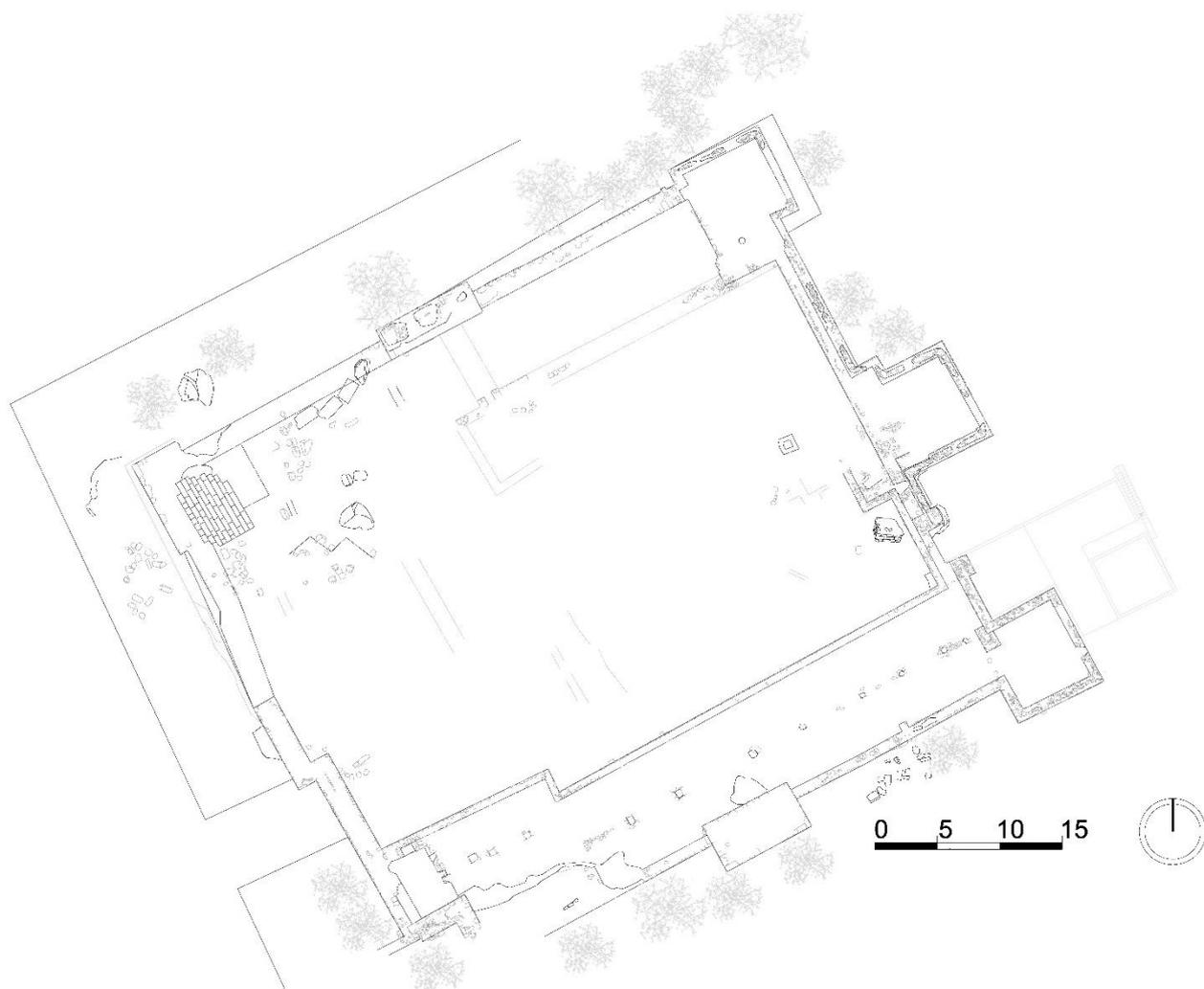
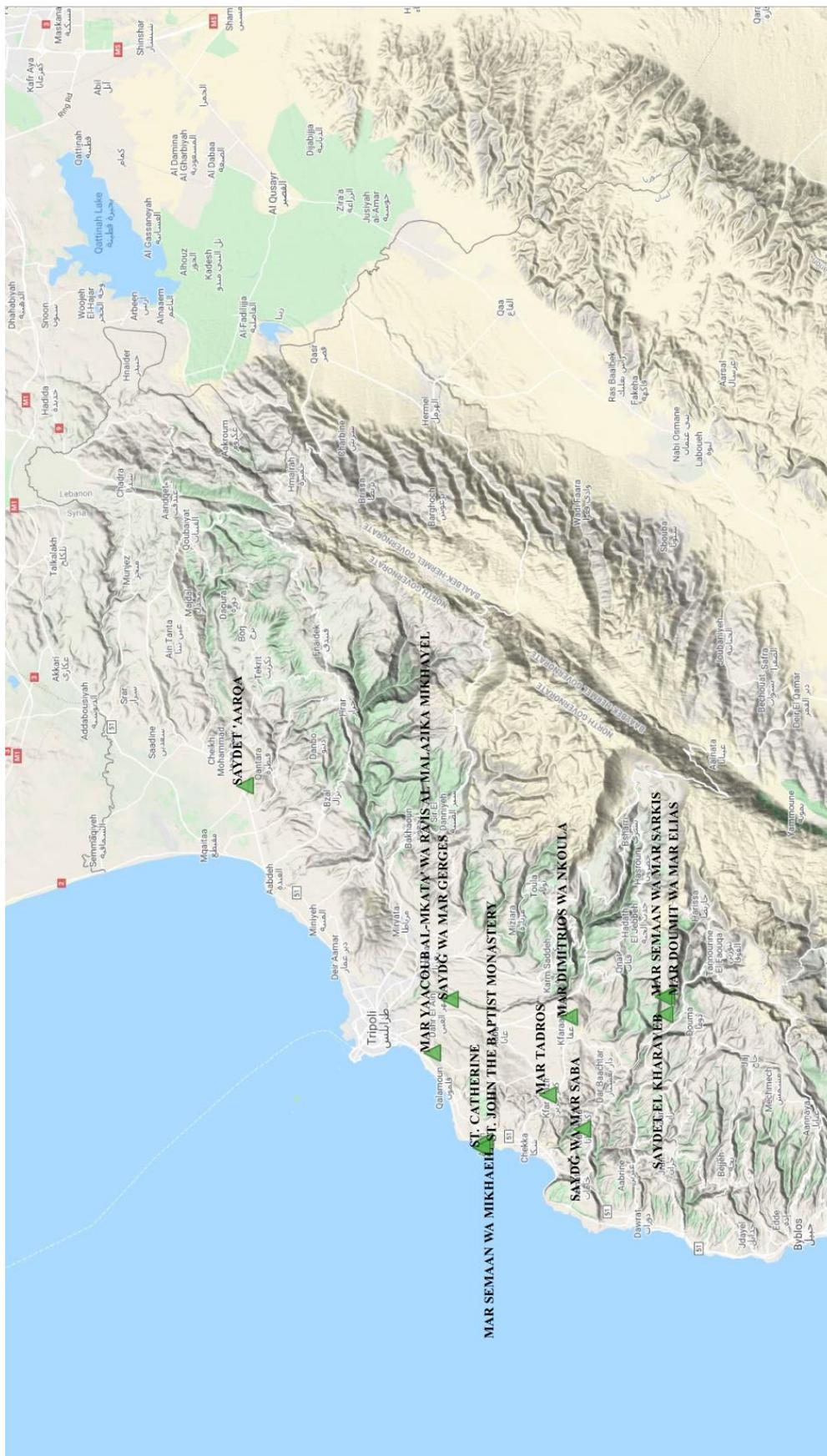
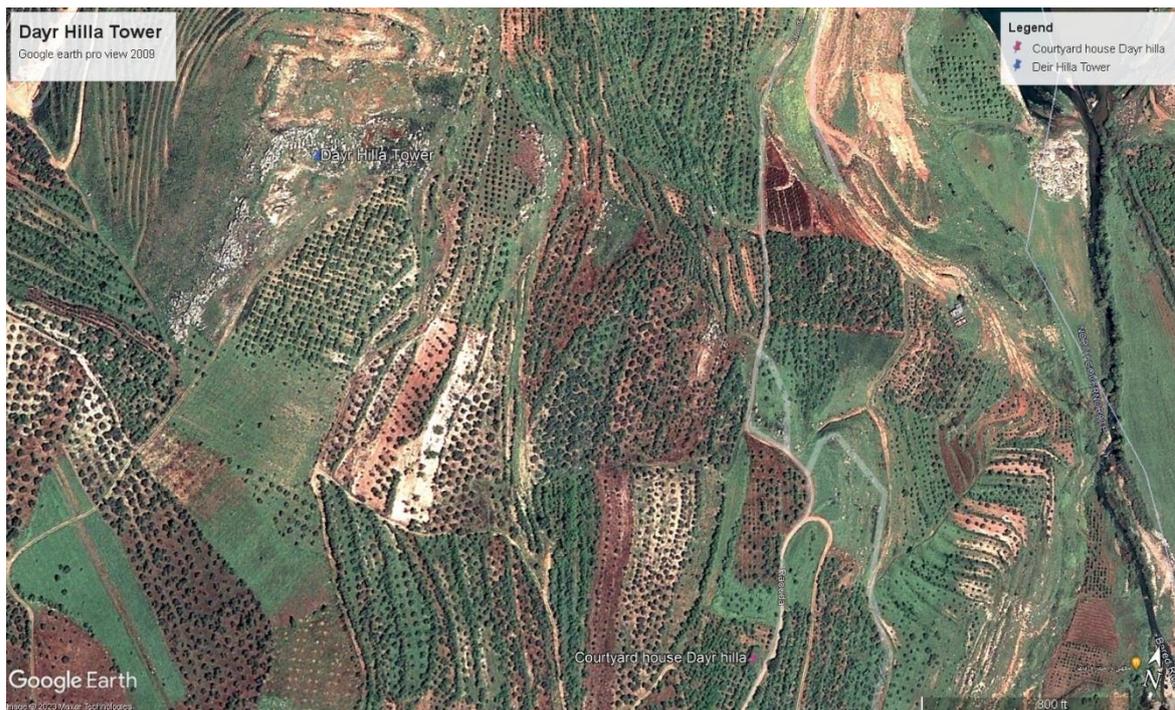


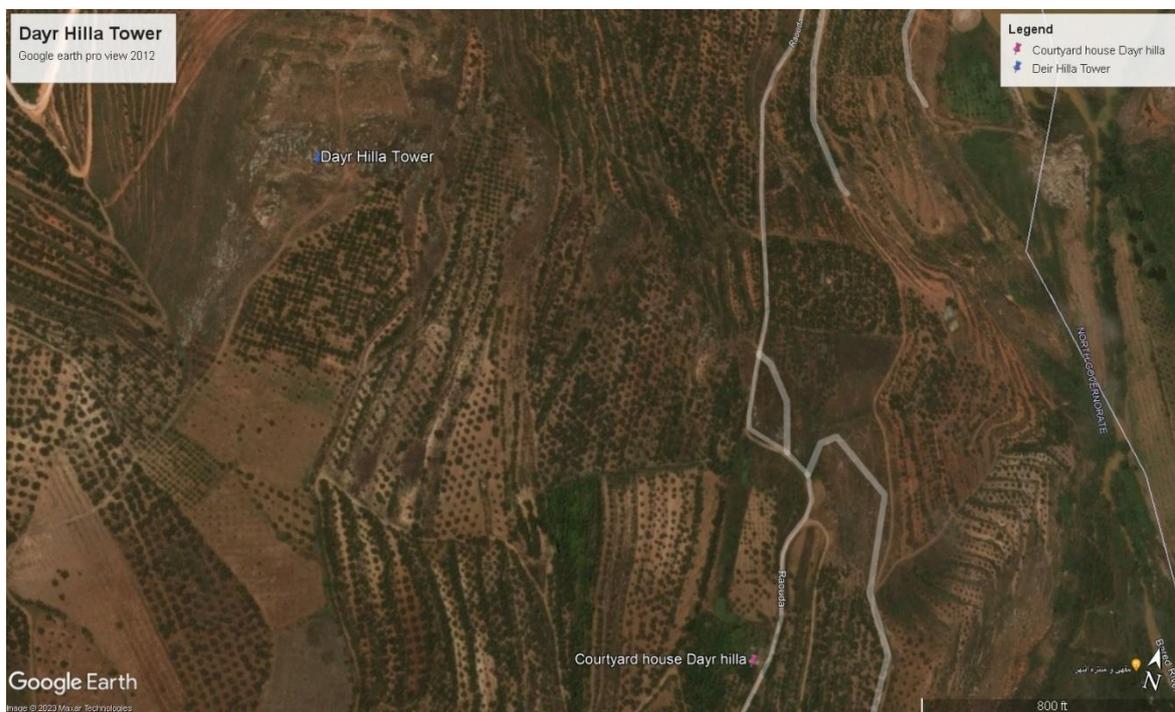
Fig. 125-Mass Plan of Qulay'āt castle.



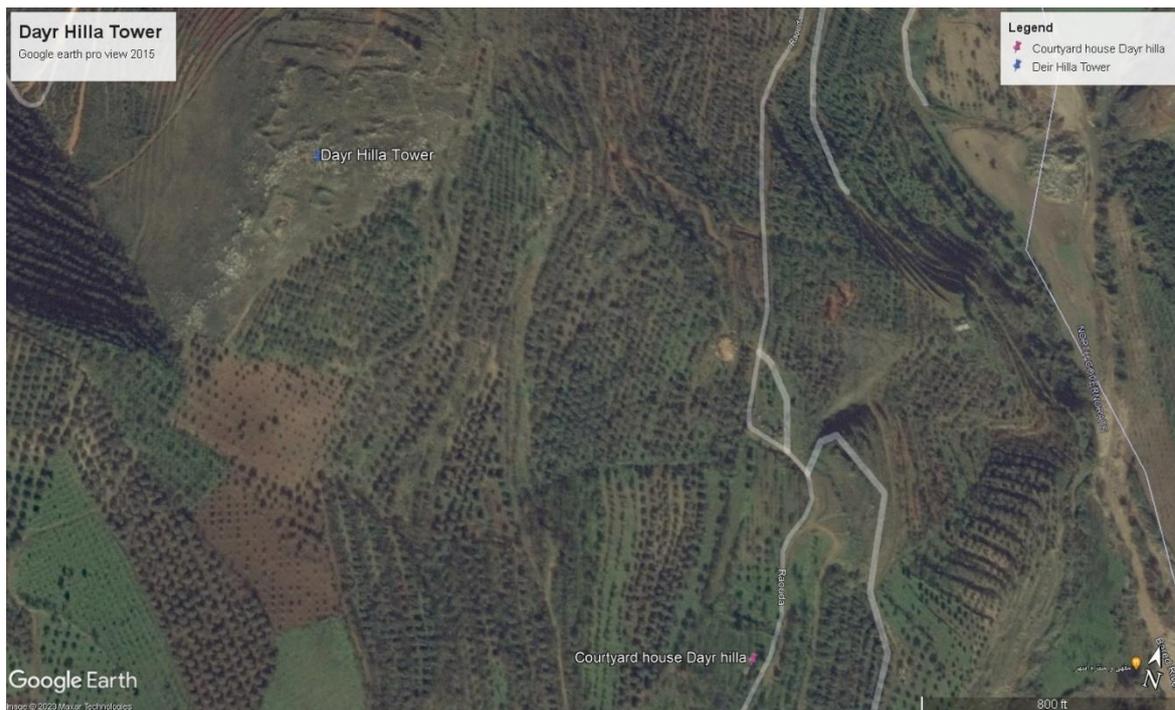
Map 6_Showing the Orthodox churches in the studied region. on QGIS



Map 7_ Google earth view from 2009_ Showing the remains of Dayr Hilla Tower and the location of Dayr Hilla courtyard-house.



Map 8_ Google earth view from 2012_ Showing the remains of Dayr Hilla Tower and the location of Dayr Hilla courtyard-house.



Map 9_Google earth view from 2015_ Showing the remains of Dayr Hilla Tower and the location of Dayr Hilla courtyard-house.



Map 10_Google earth view from 2022_ Showing the remains of Dayr Hilla Tower and the location of Dayr Hilla courtyard-house.

RENDERS AND 3D DOCUMENTATION

1- Amyūn_ Saint Phocas Church



Fig. 126-Satin Phocas, Ceiling view.



Fig. 127-St Phocas Section showing the Apse.



Fig. 128-St Phocas Axonometric showing the inner space of the chapel.

2- Menjez_ Felicium Castle

Perspective 30°



Fig. 129-Perspective view of the Chapel-1' apse after excavation.



Fig. 130-Perspective view of Chapel 2 after excavation.

Perspective 30°



Fig. 131-Perspective View of the donjon after excavation.



Fig. 132-Perspective view of the main tower of the Castle after excavation.



Fig. 133-View of the western wall of the main tower B4.



Fig. 134-External Chapel Orthmosaic (B. Takáts).



Fig. 135-Inner Chapel orthmosaic (B. Takáts).



Fig. 136-The castle orthomosaic without the suburb.



Fig. 137-Orthomosaic Apse Chapel-1 after excavation.



Fig. 138-Orthomosaic Apse Chapel-2 after excavation.



Fig. 139-Orthomosaic of the donjon after excavation.

3- Qulay‘at Castle



Fig. 140-Orthomosaic of the castle plan.

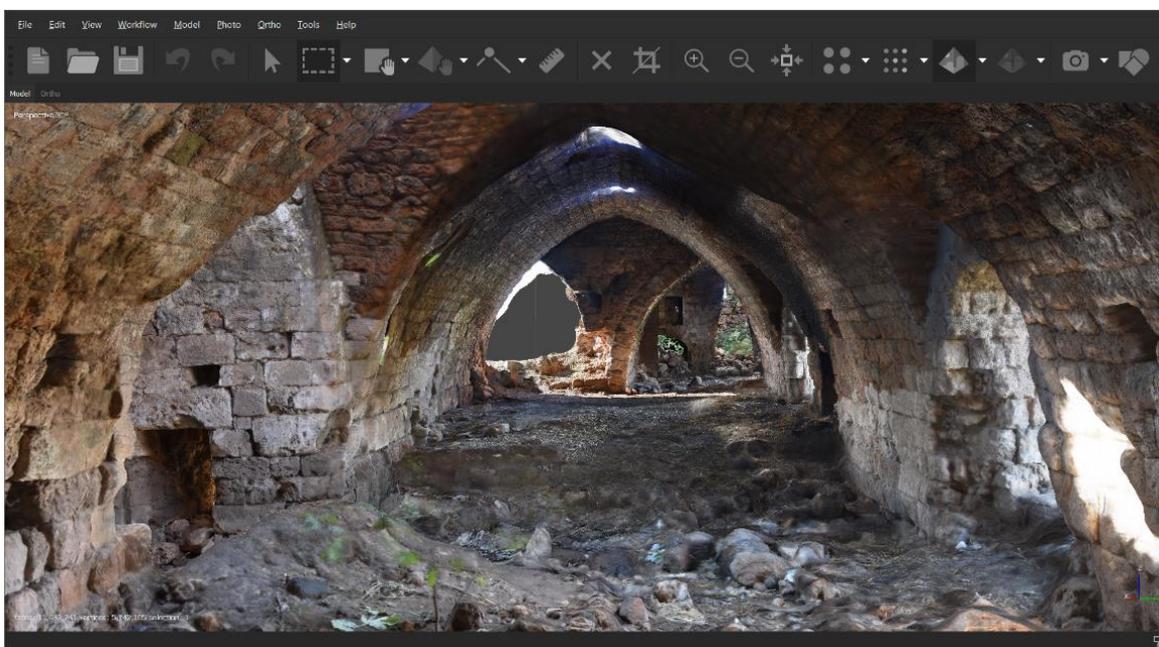


Fig. 141-3D View of space 3.o.

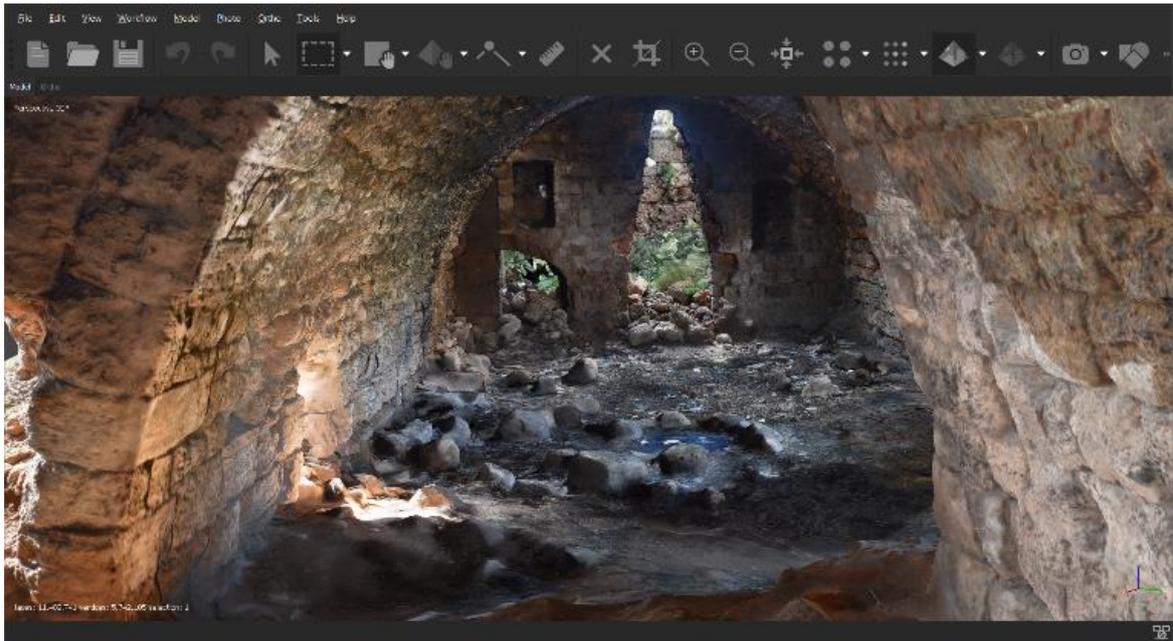


Fig. 142-3D View of space 5.o.

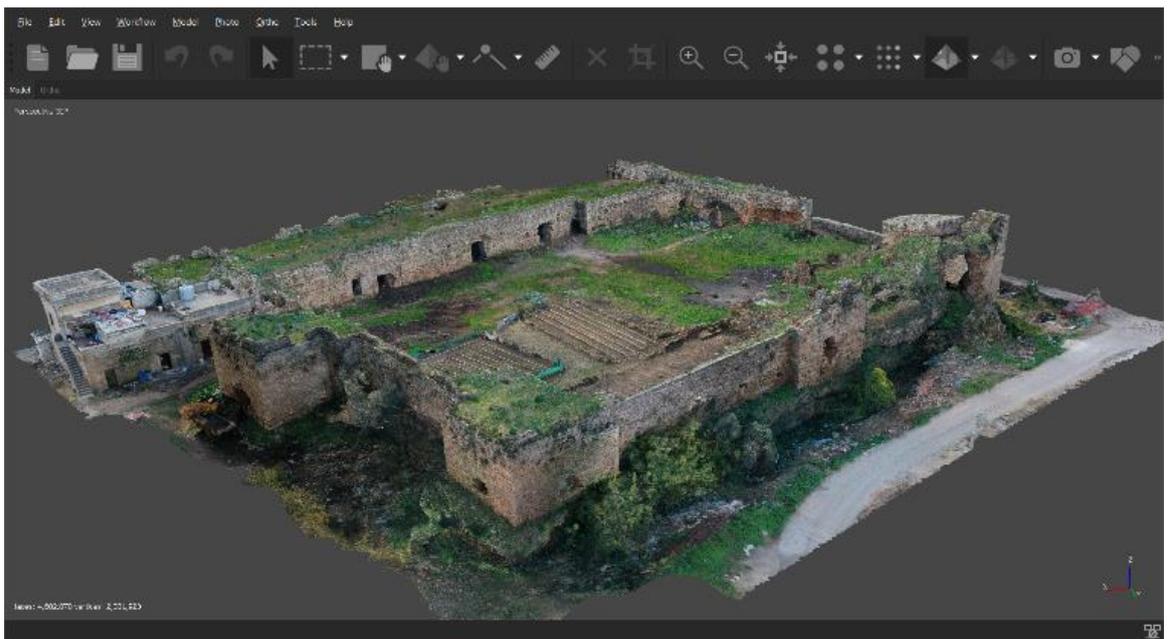


Fig. 143-3D general view of the castle.



Fig. 144-Longitudinal section 1- spaces number 3.0-5.0.



Fig. 145-Longitudinal section 2- spaces number 3.0-5.0.

4- Qubba

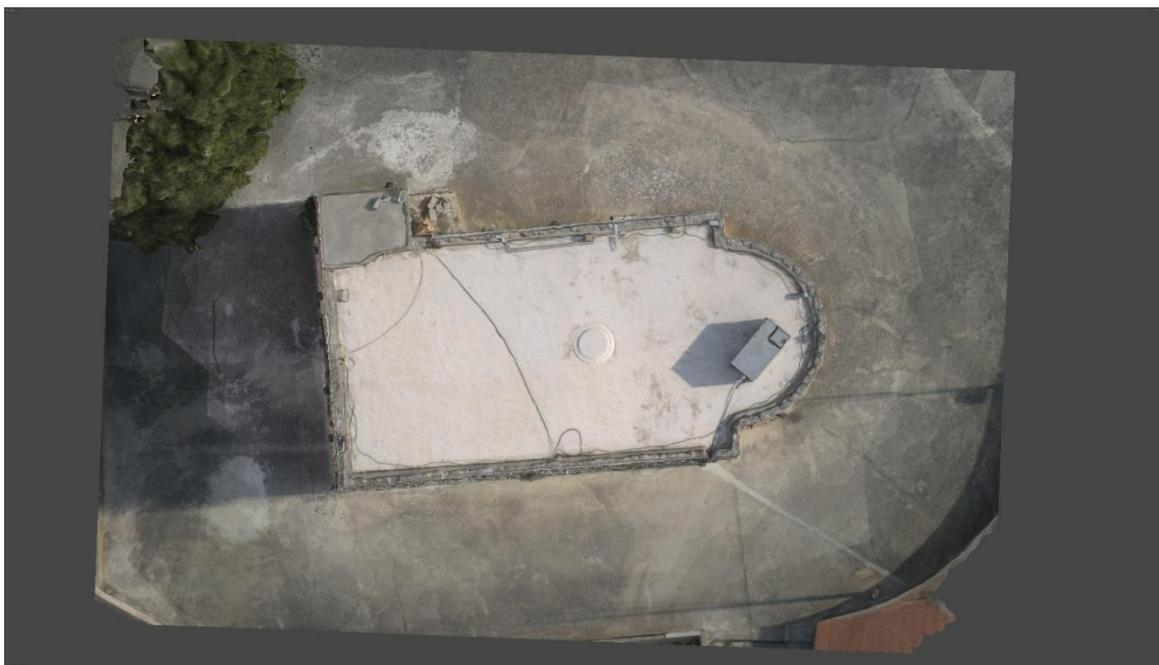


Fig. 146-Top view of the chapel.

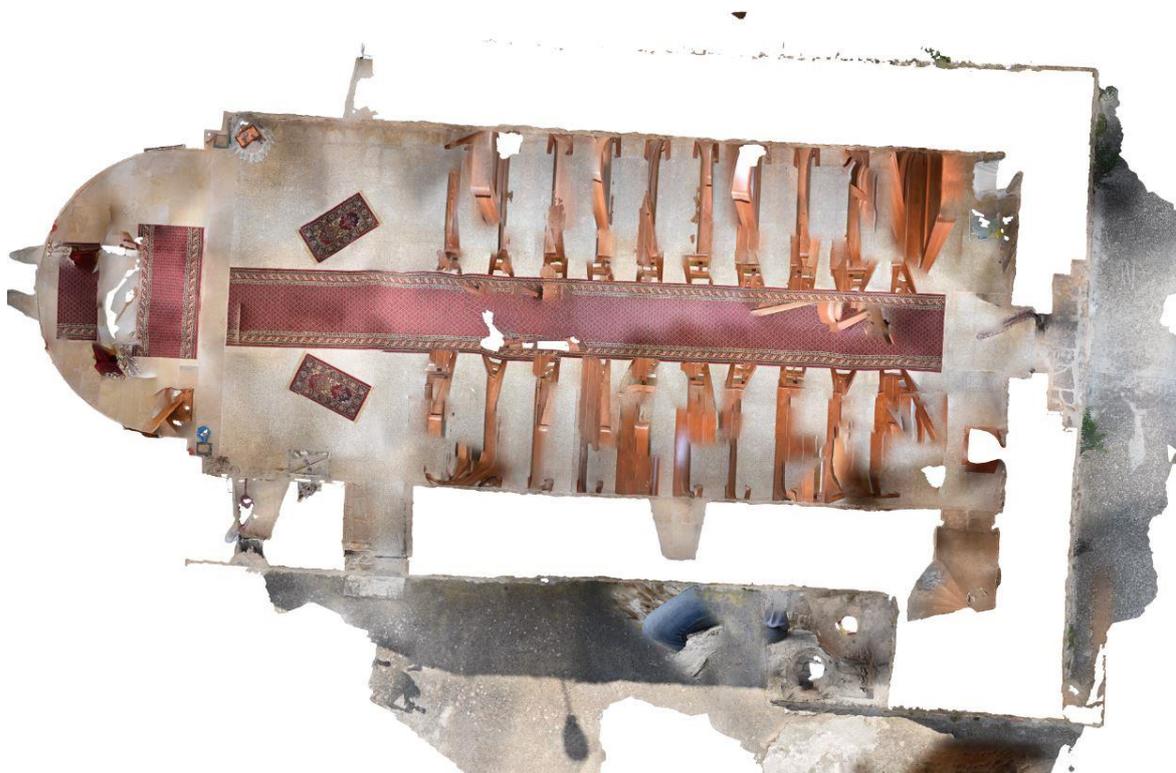


Fig. 147-Plan orthophoto of the chapel.



Fig. 148-western facade of the chapel.



Fig. 149-Exterior elevation of the south wall of the chapel.

5- *Qalamūn*, Cave Church of Mārt Marina.



Fig. 150-3D view of the cave looking south.



Fig. 151-3D view of the cave looking north.

6- Barghūm Chapel ruin



Fig. 152-View of the ruins remaining of the single nave chapel.



Fig. 153-3D Perspective view of the remaining space.

7- Maqām al-Rab temple



Fig. 154-Orthophoto of the temple most probably reused during the medieval time. (modeled and photographed by Takacs B.).

8- Courtyard house Dayr Ḥilla

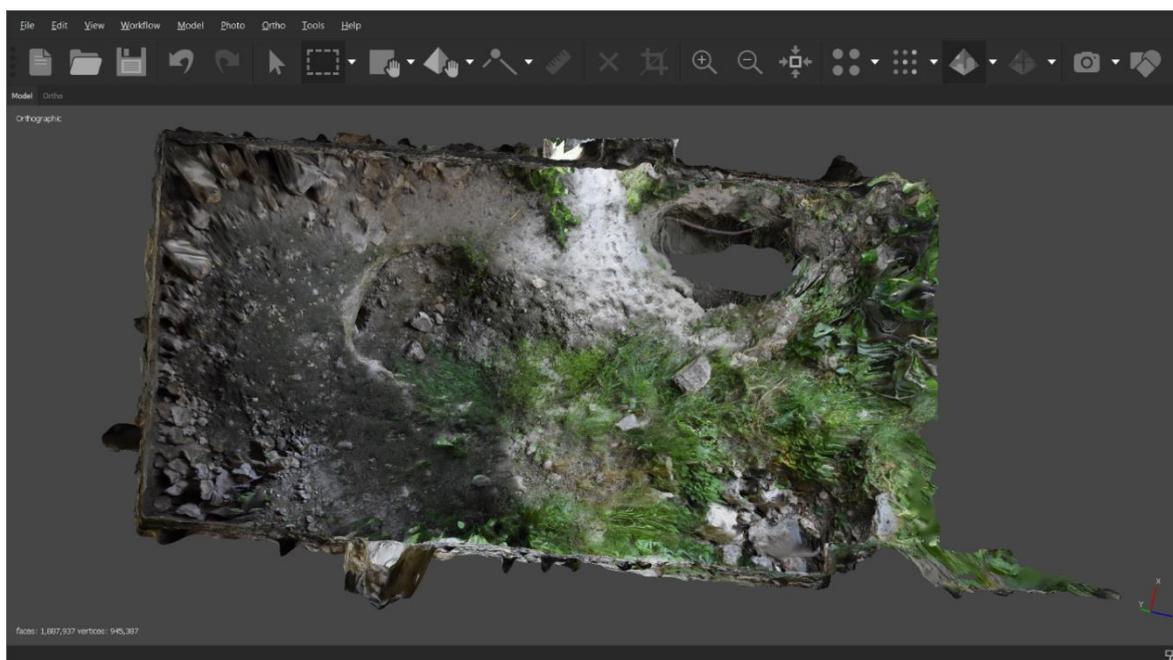


Fig. 155-Orthophoto of the plan of the courtyard house.

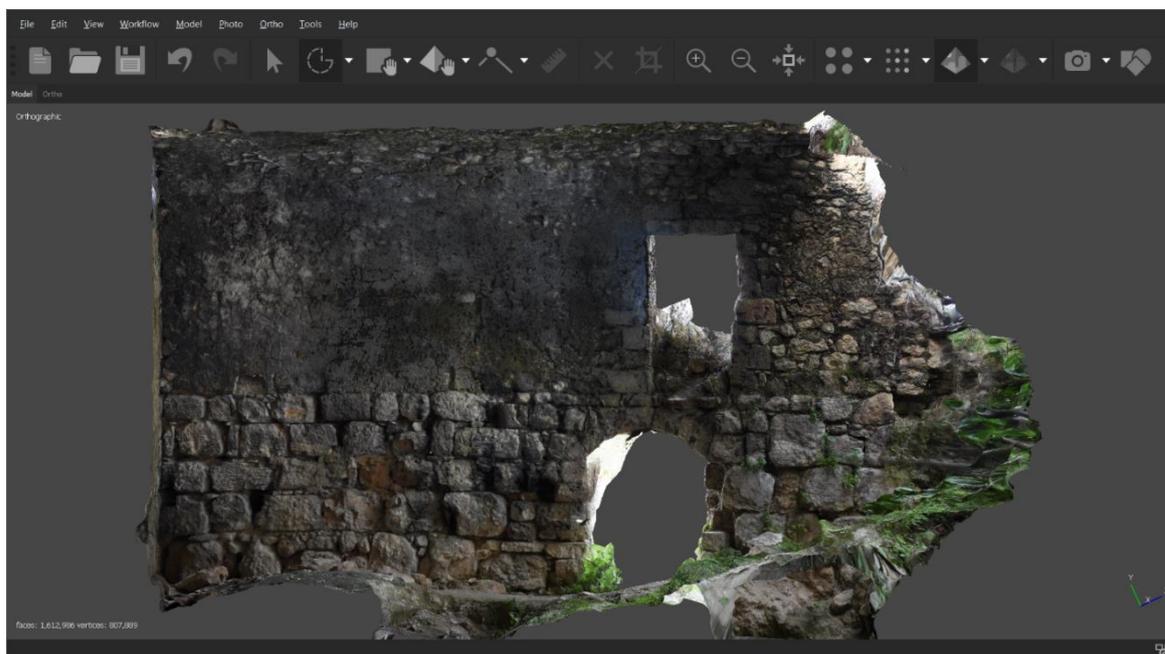


Fig. 156-Inner northern wall section.

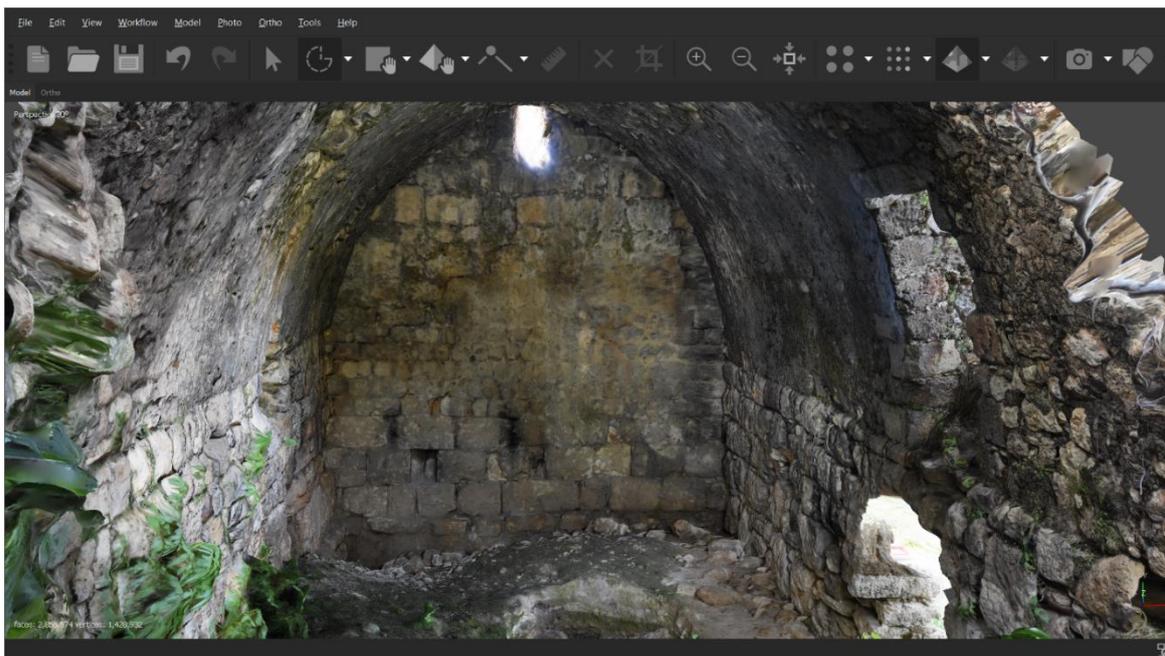


Fig. 157-View of the inner vaulted space.

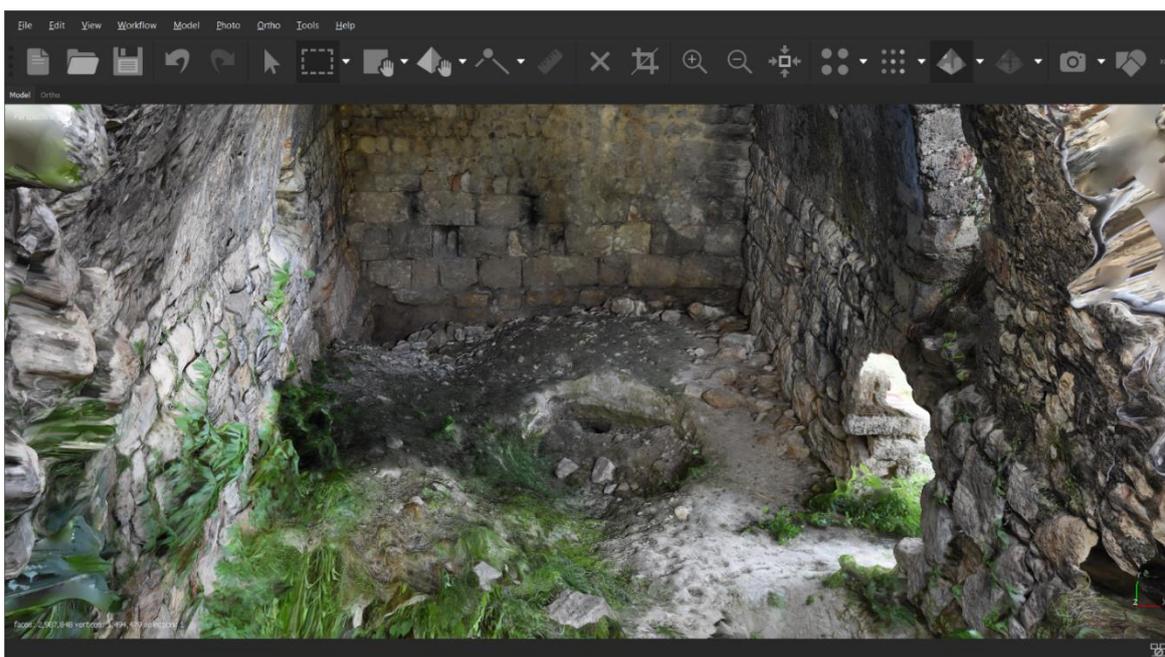


Fig. 158-Perspective showing the presence of a cistern.

9- Tibū Tower

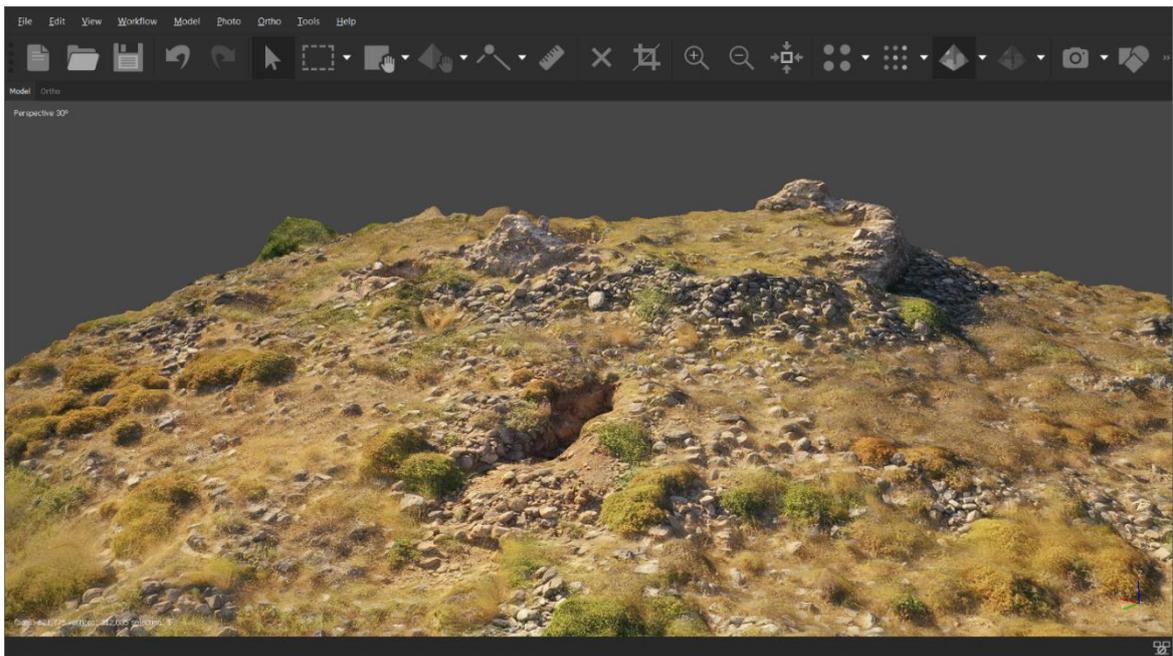


Fig. 159-3D view of the remaining walls of the tower.

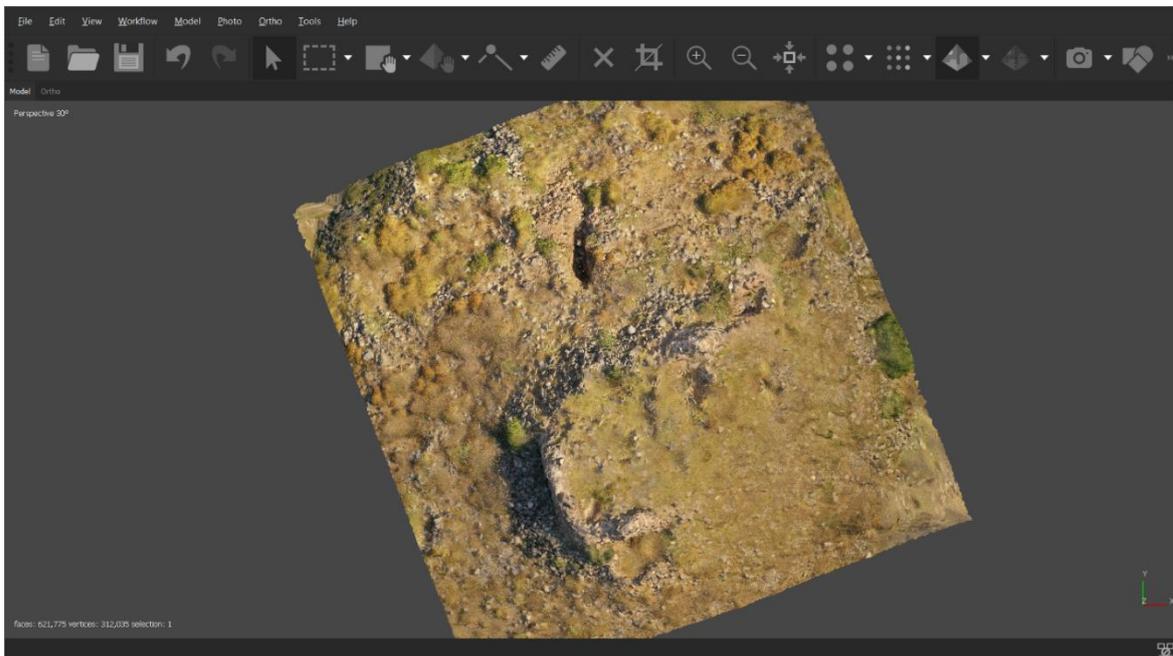


Fig. 160-Orthophoto of the tower.

10- Mār Bahnām, cave chapel, Ḥadshīt valley.



Fig. 161-Orthophoto of the chapel.



Fig. 162-View showing the chapel from the SE.

11- St. Sharbel Mayfūq



Fig. 163- Orthophoto of the main facade of the cave.



Fig. 164- View showing the two levels of the cave.

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