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Saladin und die Kreuzfahrer; Hrsg. A. Wiczorek, M. Fansa, H. Meller [Katalog anlässlich der Ausstellung in Halle 2005/06; Oldenburg 2006; Mannheim 2006]; Mainz: Philipp von Zabern 2005; ISBN 3-8053-3513-X; 518 pp., 434 colour plates and various maps; € 49,90

When reviewing the 2004 exhibition catalogue „Kein Krieg ist heilig. Die Kreuzzüge“ (cfr. *Journal für Kunstgeschichte* 8, 2004, pp. 323–326) I complained that the focus was rather too much on war and too little on the men and women who settled in the Holy Land and lived there for almost two hundred years, from their arrival in 1099 until their ultimate defeat and withdrawal from Acco in 1291. The exhibition catalogue ‚Saladin und die Kreuzfahrer‘ makes up for this in many ways as it deals extensively with the daily life in the Crusader States and its multi-ethnic society. The catalogue has a clear build-up. The first part: „Menschen – Orte – Motive“ provides the reader with the necessary historical background on the formation of and life in the crusader states and gives full scope to the many different peoples with their various backgrounds and beliefs who lived with, next to and in opposition against each other. In addition, attention is given to some of the main protagonists: Saladin, Richard the Lion-Heart, Frederick Barbarossa and Frederick II; Eleanore of Aquitaine and the elusive sultana Schadschar ad-Durr of Egypt. The second part, „Steine – Bilder – Wörter“, focuses on the art historical and cultural aspects, while the third part, the catalogue, presents various objects under diverse headings.

The historical overview begins with mapping out the political situation in the Holy Land at the time of the crusaders' arrival in 1099 and the reasons why their conquests came so easily, with so little opposition. The Muslim world was hopelessly divided amongst itself, and never more so than at the eve of the first Crusade. From the 10th until the 12th century the Muslim states had slowly been in decline and this is why there are hardly any buildings of note dating from this period. It was only under the successive leaderships of Zangi, Nuraddin and Saladin that the Muslim world regained its unity and strength, at the expense of the Fatimid dynasty in Egypt, and eventually, also at the expense of the crusaders. The essays also deal extensively with the events leading up to the battle of Hattin in 1187 when the crusader army was

defeated by Saladin and Jerusalem and much of the crusader *Hinterland* was irretrievably lost. From 1187 until 1291 the crusader kingdom consisted of a shallow strip of coastal land that had the city of Acco as its capital.

Although the crusading phenomenon had developed from the idea of liberating Jerusalem and the holy sites and making them more accessible to pilgrims, at least some of the crusaders went to the Holy Land with the idea of settling there. There was also a necessity for settling as, once freed, the holy sites needed protection. The Holy Land thus offered great opportunities for younger sons of the greater and members of the lesser nobility. And so the Crusader States came into being. Merchants also had great opportunities here and the Pisans, Genoese and Venetians had their own settlements within the crusader cities. Their role gradually became more important as the position of the crusaders deteriorated, as, in exchange for military services, the Italians demanded and got extensive trade and tax privileges.

Of course, the crusader domains and cities lay at the periphery of the Muslim world and were never a real threat to Islam as such. Although Jerusalem counted as the third holy city in Islam, after Mecca and Medina, and was considered as the place where the resurrection of the dead was to take place, it was only under Nuraddin and Saladin that this idea was fully exploited. In order to gain support in the Muslim world for their various campaigns, that involved not only the conquest of the crusader states but also many smaller Muslim cities, they came up with the idea of a Jihad. For a long time, however, various Muslim rulers bonded with the crusaders for their own ends, even against their fellow Muslims, and the crusaders likewise allied themselves with their Muslim neighbours in order to consolidate their territories, even if such dealings were at the expense of their fellow Christians. Of these, there were also various groups, as the Muslim rulers of the land had allowed their citizens to keep their own beliefs. Jews, Armenians, Nestorians and other denominations lived peacefully side by side with the Muslims, until the advent of the crusaders.

Having given the political context of the crusading movement, part II of the book deals with the culture in the crusading lands. I found this part of the book less successful than the historical section. In part this is due to the fact that the chronological build-up of this section is less clear, as the different types of art and culture are discussed individually; in part this is due to the fact that the authors, especially those of the art history essays, are more concerned with debates in the field than with presenting the material. This is all right for the art historians among us, but I wonder whether such an approach is appreciated by the general public. For instance, the first essay in this section by Jaroslav Folda deals with the question whether there is such a thing as crusader art and how it should be defined, a question that to my mind is rather academic. Folda presents the reader with an extensive historiography on the subject and even works out the German contribution to this field of approach. In his view crusader art is art that was produced by artists living in the Holy Land for members of the crusader families and their entourage. One wonders whether the crusaders themselves were so particular. The following essays deal with painting, sculpture and architecture. Whereas the architecture and sculpture of the crusader states have long

received scholarly attention, the interest in crusader painting is relatively recent. Again, the introductory essay does not so much give the reader an overview of the material but it debates particular points. Folda tries to establish whether a group of icons was produced in Acco or in the monastery of St Catherine in the Sinai on the basis of the works alone. It is only in the catalogue section on painting that some idea is given of what has actually survived and from what period.

These art historical essays are followed by short descriptions of crusader Jerusalem, Antioch, Tortosa and Acco, as well as Muslim Aleppo and Damascus. Some authors have given a concise review of the physical remains in these cities, while others have assembled contemporary descriptions of these cities. And so the reader gets some idea of what medieval Acco looked like, while he or she remains at a loss where Antioch is concerned. The photograph of a modern farmer behind a cart full of lemons, as an illustration for Antioch's lush orchards in the crusading period, is not very helpful in this respect.

The subject 'castles' is represented by the greatest of them all: the Crac des Chevaliers. This is a valid choice for several reasons. Not only is Crac one of the greatest and best preserved of the crusader castles, it was also recently researched by a team of scholars leading to new insights into the architectural history of the building's fabric, which are presented here in a concise form. Crusader castles are often said to have been much influenced by the Muslim buildings that were encountered in the newly-conquered territories, a view that is also held by Lorenz Korn in his article on mutual exchange in the architecture of the crusaders and Levant Muslims. However, in other articles in the volume it is stressed that there are hardly any surviving Muslim buildings dating from the 10th to the early 12th century and it is even suggested that there was a slump in building during this period. Where then are the buildings that influenced the crusaders? The surviving Muslim fortifications are all from the crusading period or later; we know little of the buildings preceding them. As a Muslim counterpart of Crac des Chevaliers the castle of Masyaf is presented in the catalogue, the stronghold of the Assassins, which can hardly be regarded as being representative. What is more, the essay itself is more concerned with the sect of the Assassins than with the building (even a plan is lacking), which somewhat hampers the comparison. It is only in one of the catalogue entries that we learn what buildings are likely to have most impressed the crusaders. It was not so much the Muslim castles as the extensive city walls, such as those of Antioch with its 360 towers, or those of Constantinople, that were considered to be impressive. But these walls can hardly count as a Muslim achievement.

The catalogue then turns to the material culture of the crusading world. The first and foremost goal of the crusades was to conquer the city of Jerusalem and free the church of the Holy Sepulchre from Muslim domination. The presentation therefore rightly commences with maps of Jerusalem and of the world, with Jerusalem in its centre, with representations of the Holy Sepulchre itself and with pilgrim souvenirs. Letters, treasure trove and coins attest to the immediate impact of the conquest of Jerusalem.

The next series of objects is concerned with the Christian culture existing in the Middle East when the crusaders arrived: Coptic art. In the catalogue this art is presented solely by fabrics found in graves in the Egyptian desert, which have been preserved particularly well due to the very dry conditions there. From the wear and tear of these objects it is clear that the dead were buried in their own clothes and thus these fabrics give us an idea of how the Copts dressed. All examples presented predate the crusades by a couple of centuries, as they date from the 5th to the 9th centuries and in fact the catalogue states that this way of burying the dead started in the 3^d and 4th centuries and continued into the early Middle Ages. Although these pieces discussed are fine, and very interesting, it puzzles me what their relevance is in the context of the crusades. Is it presumed that dress modes did not change?

Following this a section dealing with Saladin's court plunges the reader straight into the advanced 12th century. From 1171 Saladin ruled from Cairo. After defeating Nuraddin in 1174, he moved his capital to Damascus, and it was here that he was buried in 1193. He was never in any of these places for a long duration of time. Furthermore, Saladin despised luxury and built no palaces. As a true Muslim he drank no alcohol. His court was no great centre of art and science, although Saladin did have an interest in poetry, history, theology and law. Apart from the coins bearing his name and his letters, there are thus no objects that can be directly related to his court. In spite of this, some objects have been included in this section of the catalogue that to my mind would have been better off in the following section, which is devoted to courtly life, i. e. the beautiful 13th- or 14th-century Syrian brass bowl (Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence, cat. B.7) decorated with representations of the planets and the Zodiac. Not only does the bowl postdate Saladin by a century and a half, the representations on it would not have been to his liking, as Saladin did not care for astrology. The same holds true for the 12th-century bowl from the Davids Collection in Copenhagen, showing a representation of the 'courtly life'. As for the castles included in this section: I can understand why Saone was chosen (It was conquered by Saladin in 1188 and is known as Qa'lat Salah-addin, Saladin's castle, today), but I cannot imagine why Masyaf is dealt with here. Masyaf, after all, was the main castle of the Assassins. Although Saladin may have had dealings with this sect, the castle itself had nothing to do with his court. Instead, I would have put the model of the citadel of Damascus in this section, which has now ended up in the section dealing with courtly life and its luxury. This section discusses a whole range of precious articles, for, even though Saladin shunned all luxury, many other Muslim rulers did not. One of the objects presented, a brass box decorated with silver, was in fact made between 1231 and 1233 for Saladin's grandchild Malik al-'Aziz, and was probably to be used in the palace he built himself inside the Aleppo citadel. The decoration of the box shows up scenes from court life: dancers and musicians.

Apart from the courts, the mosque and its surrounding schools, hospitals and cemeteries were given a whole range of ornaments and books, which, unlike at the courts, were essentially non-figurative. Various objects representative of this type of Muslim art have been brought together in the catalogue, many dating from the 14th

century and deriving from Islamic collections in the west. It is a pity that, neither in the catalogue nor in the introductory essays, attention is given to the minbar of the Al Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, which was burnt in a fire in 1969, but from which several fragments survive. This minbar was built by Nuraddin, allegedly after having a vision of the liberation of Jerusalem from the infidel, and stood in the great mosque of Aleppo until Saladin's conquest. It was Saladin who brought it to Jerusalem.

The next sections of the catalogue discuss the world of learning, the survival of antique manuscripts through Arab writings, oriental textiles, glass, ceramics and metalwork.

Having dealt with the arts and culture in the Muslim world the catalogue focuses on the crusaders themselves, starting with the figure of King Richard the Lion-Heart, who departed for the Holy land in 1190, arrived there in 1191 and departed in 1192. Other protagonists represented are Bohemund of Antioch, Pope Clemens III, the grand masters of the German Knights and the Knights of St John, and the military orders are further represented by various seals, castles and objects. Unfortunately, the castles have been so thoroughly destroyed that it is difficult to picture what life inside them must have been like. Excavations at the castle of Montfort have however shown that the interior was luxuriously painted and other finds, such as beakers of enamelled glass, also attest to a high standard of living. The same holds true for other castles. Fancy ceramics were found inside the Pilgrim's castle at Atlit. At Acco a stone bearing the heraldic shield of the Lusignan family was discovered, reused in the wall of a madrasa. It may have come from the royal tower at Acco.

Apart from this, book and reliquary production show that by the 13th century life in the crusader states was settled enough for local artistic centres to develop. Objects made in the Holy Land were brought back to the west by returning crusaders and pilgrims, who also brought along with them older reliquaries. The greatest collection of such objects is to be found in the treasury of Halberstadt cathedral and may well stem from a donation made by Bishop Konrad of Krosigk (1201–1208), who from 1202 to 1205 had been on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and who claimed to have been given these precious objects by the Byzantine emperor himself. However, as Konrad had travelled to Constantinople in the company of the Venetian forces who plundered Constantinople in 1204, it is quite probable that Konrad acquired his precious relics through less elegant means.

From the high arts the catalogue moves on to less precious objects that do however give some idea of the economic means by which the crusader states sustained themselves. The last two sections discuss the fall of Acco and the „Nachleben“.

On the whole this beautifully-produced book presents the reader with a very good survey of the current state of the art where crusader studies are concerned and it forms essential reading for anyone interested in the crusades.

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